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# American Actor Series

EDITED BY LAURENCE HUTTON







### AMERICAN ACTOR SERIES

# EDWIN FORREST

BY

## LAWRENCE BARRETT

With Ellustrations



BOSTON

JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY

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# EDWIN FORREST.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### PROLOGUE.

A SIMPLE record of the career of EDWIN FORREST will be an instructive study to the men and women of his profession, and perhaps may prove pleasing to the reader for whom the details of the actor's life have interest. This record should be written while there are those living who can remember him at his first appearance, as well as at the close of his remarkable life, that errors of date may be corrected, and a fair and approved estimate of him may be given to posterity.

While it will not be necessary to exalt him as perfection, it will be impossible to deny that he had great and good impulses, and an aptitude for his calling beyond that of any other actor of his time. He was, moreover, essentially an American actor, — the first great one, — and his career has new and particular interest on that account.

Choosing his profession in early boyhood, Forrest achieved a great fame at an age when others were in the alphabet of their life-work. He passed through its

humble stages so rapidly, that the want of the training which only gradual and regular advancement can give was evident to the last in his performances. To read the words of loving friends and enthusiastic critics, published since his death, it would be supposed that his progress was made without rivalry or opposition. But this is not the fact. Edwin Forrest came upon the stage at a time when the drama in America was in the full tide of success, when every theatre in the larger cities could boast an excellent stock company. have distanced such men as John R. Scott, David Ingersoll, Augustus Addams, Charles Eaton, Charles Webb, and James E. Murdoch, was a victory due as much to his personal character as to his merits as an actor. The annals of the stage will show that many of these men enjoyed a reputation equal, and in some cases superior, to that of Forrest. That he came to the front at last and left them all behind, is one of the glories of which his memory should not be deprived.

The condition of the actor at the time of the *début* of Edwin Forrest was singularly happy as well as singularly unfortunate. The lovers of the drama who filled the theatre when the old plays were presented could not show their regard for their favorites more effectually, so they imagined, than by inviting them to social meetings, where indulgence became the ruin of some of the brightest intellects of that day. Many had fallen about him, and with such examples Forrest had the strength and the wisdom to shape his course by a safer guide than that which his gifted fellows had so blindly chosen.

His more thoughtful admirers have pronounced his style entirely original, — a word so often misapplied in theatrical criticism that it has deceived many readers. If to be original means that the player must adopt an absolutely new style of acting, create new and hitherto unattempted, undreamed-of situations in the standard old plays, and present them in a shape unlike that in which they had previously been given, then there can be no such thing as an original actor. The so-called "business" of nearly all the commonly acted plays has been handed down through generations of actors, amended and corrected in many cases by each performer, but never radically changed. New readings of certain passages have been substituted for old, but the traditional "points" have been preserved; personal characteristics and physical peculiarities finding ample freedom of expression within the old rulings of each play. Styles of acting, too, have changed as little as the "business" of the drama.

There have been three methods of acting, and only three, upon the English stage since the restoration of Charles the Second, during whose reign the theatres were reopened in England after their long night of Puritanism. These have been illustrated in our own time by Forrest, Macready, and the elder Booth. Modifications of these styles have been seen; but the groundwork remains, which admits of space for individual freedom, but denies complete independence of the old forms. At times one style has prevailed, at others its rival; and the claim of originality which one generation of play-goers has set up for its favorite has

arisen from the misfortune which yields to the actor only the recollection of his work during the hour of its performance, so that he cannot fairly be judged by those who have not seen and known him on the stage. The generation that witnessed the advent of Edmund Kean knew not that his school was that of Garrick, dead then less than half a century. The method of Edwin Forrest, on the other hand, dates even farther back: through the Kembles to Betterton and Barton Booth, and perhaps to the same source through Cooper, with whom he played, and whose acting was undoubtedly that upon which his own style was based, for it was charged against him, in his early years, that he was a servile copyist of this great artist, — a statement as false and groundless as that of his entire originality.

A glance at the condition of the theatre at the time of Edwin Forrest's appearance will reveal how much he gained from those who preceded him, and how much he added to the splendor of the stage and its traditions. This will properly preface the story of his life.

The impulse given to the drama in America by the genius of the actors who crossed the Atlantic to our own shores at the close of the last century had not been exhausted when Forrest came upon the stage. Many of those artists, who had been educated in the best of the great English circuits, were veterans at this time; and the eager eyes of the young Forrest might nightly see such men as Maywood, Jefferson, Warren, and Wood in the regular stock, while such meteors as Cooper and Cooke occasionally flashed across the theatrical firmament. The character of the plays deter-

mined the style of the actor. All the traditions of the stage were in the possession of these gifted men and women, and Forrest could see his own beloved "Lear" acted in the original text, and with all the stage business, which had been handed down through generations of performers, perhaps direct from Richard Burbage, who had listened to the master himself in that dim old theatre which stood beside the Thames.

In Forrest's early days it was the fashion to admire the grand works of the old dramatists; and modern sensational plays were yet unborn. Éach piece was cast to the full strength of the company, and no actor was considered too good for his part, however humble it might be. Each year brought the same order of plays, varied only by a revival, perhaps, of one of the less familiar old tragedies or comedies, such as "Every Man in his Humor" or "The Fatal Dowry." Thus the play-goer became acquainted not only with the manner of the old actors, but with the very text of the plays themselves. The best qualities of the drama in the mother-country had been transplanted to a fresher and more vigorous soil, and the harvest was reaped in a group of players unsurpassed for talent in any age of the theatre.

Although the accessories of the stage were still poor and mean, the audiences were recompensed by the genius of the actors, who could fire the imagination and eke out the illusion even in face of the many disadvantages by which they were surrounded. Mr. Forrest never fully escaped from the influences of that era. To the last he adhered to many of the prejudices then

formed, scorning all the appliances by which modern ingenuity has embellished the theatre. He was fond of referring to the days of Shakspere himself, when a bit of rudely painted canvas, stretched from side to side of the stage, upon which was scrawled, "This is a house," "This is a wood," represented the sum of the theatre's stock of scenery. He was wont to declare that in those blessed days it was absolutely necessary to be an *actor*, as no aid from without was known or dreamed of.

In one of his later travelling experiences he reached a small town where the stage appliances were beneath contempt, and where this theory of his might find a test. His manager feared to tell him how meagre were the scenes which must represent Elsinore; but as night approached he was forced, of course, to speak. He had hung two American flags at the stage openings, and these represented drop curtains as well as palace, platform, chamber, and castle. Instead of anger and annoyance, Forrest only smiled as he saw these preparations, and he declared that nothing could be better. He would show the audience that "Hamlet" could be played in that foreign frame with none of its powers shorn or weakened, while his own patriotism would stimulate his energies, as his eyes rested on the banners of his native land.

In enumerating the influences under which Edwin Forrest entered the theatre, we should not omit to name that which lay in the familiar good-fellowship of the old actors. They did not always put off with the garb the cheerfulness or the sociability of the character

they had lately been enacting. Falstaff often carried into private life the habits and characteristics of his stage existence, the line of identity and assumption not always being very clearly drawn.

Our young player, who had already tasted the delicious sweets of an amateur triumph, was able to learn from the gracious lips of older actors incidents of their bright lives, which opened now and then to his gaze a tempting vista down which his own future glory might be discerned. As so much of stage knowledge is conventional and unwritten, especially in the earlier and mechanical outlines, such an experience was of great value to the youth who was soon to appear as *Young Norval*, and create an impression so profound that the after-glories of the actor's life seemed poor beside that boyish success.

With a tender farewell to those heroes of the past whose example did so much to mould the early career of Edwin Forrest, we may now turn to the events of the life upon the threshold of which we have perhaps lingered too long.

#### CHAPTER II.

#### EARLY YOUTH.

DWIN FORREST was born in the city of Philadelphia, March 9, 1806. His father, a Scotchman, had emigrated to this country during the last year of the preceding century. His calling was that of an importer of Scotch fabrics. He married, in 1795, Rebecca Lauman, a lady of German descent on both sides, but of American birth. Of this marriage seven children were born, the eldest of whom died in infancy. Of the six who lived to maturity, three were boys, three girls; and their names are here given in the order of their birth, - Lauman, Henrietta, William, Caroline, Edwin, Eleanora. Thus the subject of this memoir was the last of the sons, the youngest but one of the family. The father, William Forrest, having been unsuccessful in business, became a servant of the United States Bank, where he remained until the closing of that institution. He was then employed by Stephen Girard, in the Girard Bank, in which service he died in 1819, of consumption, aged sixty-two years. He had accumulated nothing in the way of worldly wealth, and left only his own good name as a legacy for his children. The burden of life and labor thus abruptly laid

down was at once taken up by the widow, who gave instant proof of her ability by the faithful support of her family under the trying conditions of poverty, and the affliction which his loss entailed. She was a woman of great strength of character, of unusual firmness, and, withal, of a loving, affectionate nature. Such mothers are always to be found at the starting-point of every great man's career. Opening a small shop, she soon succeeded in gaining sufficient income for their joint support, while she was thoughtful enough to place her growing boys in situations where they might aid in the task of providing for the fold. There were to be no drones in that hive, and the industry of the mother animated the spirits of the children. Our business lies with the youth whose name heads these pages. leave the others, to follow Edwin Forrest. Our path will lead us back to them again, as we pass along, and we may dismiss them now.

Before the death of the father, and while actual want was still unknown in the unpretending home, the children were sent to school, and their future laid out by the wisdom of both parents. Edwin, like many others of his profession, was designed for the ministry, and as the lad early developed certain qualities which are supposed to point directly to that honorable pursuit, the choice of the parents seemed approved by Providence. Before the age of eleven, the future Channing had attracted admiring listeners by the music of his voice and by the aptness of his mimicry. Those qualities were developed chiefly in the repeating of such wise words as fell from the lips of his teacher and friend,

Father Pilmore, an eminent divine for whom Edwin Forrest entertained a lifelong reverence.

The boy's memory was remarkable. He could recite whole passages of his preceptor's sermons. Perched upon a chair or stool, crowned with the proud approval of family and friends, the young mimic filled the hearts of his listeners with fervent hope of his coming success in the fold of their beloved church. These hopes were destined to be met with disappointment. The bias of the future leader of the American stage was only faintly outlined as yet: his hour of development was still to come.

The anecdotes of his early years are meagre and uninteresting. We may be sure he did not escape the hard rubs with which boyhood prepares the ground for the struggles of manhood. We have reports of encounters wherein the victory was his, though not obtained without sanguinary marks of the conflict, showing how near defeat the conqueror had been. In the early wordy preliminaries of these bouts we hear of such expressions as would have shocked the Rev. Mr. Pilmore, and made the staid mother blush for her son's future; adjectives which, however they may emphasize passion, are still not pleasant to record. Edwin Forrest's youth was that of nearly all city lads whose parents are too poor to provide watchful guards over the companions of their children.

He must have learned early the road to the theatre,—permitted to go by the family, or going, perhaps, without the knowledge or consent of his seniors in the overworked household; for before he had passed his tenth year our young sermonizer and street champion

was a member of a juvenile Thespian club, and before eleven he had made his appearance at one of the regular theatres, in the rôle of a female. In the habiliments of the weaker sex, adorned for the play by unskilful hands, in such garments as could be collected hastily and secretly from several sources, which covered a figure always the reverse of feminine, and were worn in a manner far removed from the dainty grace belonging to such robes, our hero came from behind the scenes for his début; no doubt with a palpitation of heart suitable to his disguise, but in no other way belonging to his rôle. His reception was a shriek of laughter which drowned his efforts to speak. His grotesque appearance convulsed the audience, accustomed even to amateur atrocities of a kindred nature; and, after a vain attempt to arrange a hostile meeting with a boy in the pit whom he had especially observed as one of his most conspicuous critics, he was hustled ignominiously from the scene, to weep with rage over his defeat, and no doubt to attribute his failure to the unappreciative public, always the criminal in such cases. His first experience had taught him, at least, that his genius lav not in the line of feminine characters. He returned to the private station from which he had thus emerged considerably chagrined, and with deep regret that he had not " had it out" with his loud-voiced enemy in front of the stage.

His devotion to the drama was not permitted to interfere with his home duties. He had been regularly apprenticed successively to a printer, a cooper, and a ship-chandler before the age of thirteen; but we have no

record of his services, or the date of their continuance, in any of these unpoetical callings. We may be sure his happiness lay in the evasion of his work whenever he could steal a visit to the shrine where his beloved Thespis reigned supreme. He soon outgrew the ignominy of his first failure, and again and again sought to overcome the disgrace by a fresh appearance. To his appeals the irate manager lent a deaf ear; he had not forgotten the disaster of that eventful night, and did not desire to see it repeated. The sacred portals that led to the enchanted ground of the stage were closed against young Forrest, the warden being instructed not to let the importunate boy pass the door. At last, in desperation, he resolved to storm the citadel, to beat down the faithful guard, and to carry the war into the enemy's camp. One night he dashed past the astonished guardian of the stage entrance just as the curtain fell upon one of the acts of a play. He emerged before the footlights, eluding all pursuit, dressed as a harlequin; and before the audience had recovered from its astonishment at this scene not set down in the bills, the baffled, but not subdued, aspirant had delivered the lines of an epilogue in rhyme with so much effect that, before he could be seized by the astounded stage manager and hurled from the theatre, he had attracted public notice, successfully won his surprised audience, and not only secured immunity from punishment for his temerity, but actually gained that respect in the manager's estimation which he had so long and so vainly striven to acquire.

Forrest had made a reputation as a mimic among his fellows, before whom he was often called upon to show

his skill. He was especially noted for his recital of Goldsmith's epilogue, beginning,—

## "Hold, Prompter, hold!"

These performances took place in a small barn or loft hastily improvised for the use of the lad and his companions. Edwin was regarded as the chief of this youthful histrionic band, not only on account of his superior ability, but because of his already powerful physique, and a certain awe which his manner inspired in the breasts of his associates. He knew more of the world than they, and was the envied possessor of an awful knowledge to which they could not pretend. He had seen the sacred domain of the theatre in all its mysterious glory, not only as an auditor, but as an actor as well. He had even stood erect in the presence of some of those great ones whose names adorned the play-bills, and were such marvels to the eyes of the young and the uninitiated. This is a period in the life of Forrest which nearly all boys reared in cities can recall; for who has not passed through the first awful but delicious mysteries of the play-bill, the theatre, the performance? Who has not, under the youthful roundabout, felt his heart stirred by the boyish associations of the drama?

The power to attract attention by his recitations meeting with encouragement in such humble surroundings, the young actor soon sought out opportunities on a larger platform and before more critical hearers. At a public exhibition of the effects of oxide gas he was asked by the exhibitor to become the medium of illustration. He consented eagerly. Under its effect he

dashed wildly into one of the soliloquies of "Richard the Third," and had wellnigh ranted the whole of the tent scene, until where *Richard*, alarmed by the shouts of his murdered victims, cries out, "Give me another horse; bind up my wounds," when, the effects of the gas passing suddenly away, the speaker awoke to find himself deafened by the plaudits of an audience which was surprised and delighted by the unexpected performance.

This incident made an impression upon the celebrated lawyer, John Swift, who at once took an interest in the lad, and was instrumental in shaping his career. By his aid Forrest was promised an appearance at the Walnut Street Theatre, then one of the leading theatres of the country. Many difficulties had to be overcome before the efforts of Mr. Swift were successful. Wood and Warren, the veteran managers, had been unhappy in their débutants, none of whom had gained a permanent footing; but the kindly interest of his patron prevailed at last against the prejudices of the managers, and the opportunity to appear was offered. He selected Young Norval, in Home's tragedy of "Douglas," then the crucial test by which many a young beginner essayed the favor of an audience.

Supported by the kindness of two friends, — Mr. S. K. Levin, a liquor merchant, and Edwin A. Carpenter, a grocer, — he was enabled to receive some preliminary teaching in elocution from Lemuel G. White, a distinguished professor in that branch of the dramatic art. Mr. White had himself hoped to be an actor, but had failed on several occasions to secure an engagement. He was a devoted believer in the Garrick-Kean school,

— the natural school, so called, — as opposed to the declamatory or artificial method, of which the Kembles were the exponents in our century. James E. Murdoch, the most gifted elocutionist and the most charming high comedian of his day, and David Ingersoll, "the silver tongued," were among the noted scholars of this master.

The long-hoped-for night had come at last. All the hours which had led to this supreme one were over, and their anxieties and hopes put by, to make room for an event the greatest, so far, in the life of the youth of whom we are writing. The aid of friends, their support and encouragement, the teaching of White, the experience gained in all the good performances he had seen, in all the poor ones he had himself given, had only been preparatory to this auspicious night, — the 27th of November, 1820.

The theatre was filled by an audience eager to welcome a genius, but critical and severe to reprove impudent assumption. The future Master of the American Stage, then fourteen years of age, — a boy in years, a man in character, — announced as "A young Gentleman of this City," surrounded by a group of veteran actors who had for many years shared the favor of the public, began a career which was as auspicious at its opening as it was splendid in its maturity. White had characterized the lad as hobbledehoy on first seeing him, and felt doubtful of his success; but he gave no sign of awkwardness now, — the pupil was worthy of his master. At his entrance he won the vast audience at once by the grace of his figure, and the modest bearing which was natural to him. Something of that magnetism which he ex-

ercised so effectively in later years, now attracted all who heard him, and made friends even before he spoke. In the scenes of tenderness with his mother, his melting voice went to every heart, and won for him the tribute of tears; in the scenes of tumult and defiance his proud spirit soared to a surprising height, and the rapturous applause which followed testified to his power; and when the last dying exclamation of the so-long-orphaned *Norval* fell upon the ears of his mother, all the pent-up feelings of the assemblage gave way to a torrent of approbation, which called the blushing youth before the curtain, covered him with the glory of resounding cheers, and filled his heart with those glad sounds for which the actor lives and endures the trials of his lot.

William B. Wood, in his "Personal Recollections of the Stage," published in 1854, gives the cast of "Douglas" on this occasion in full. It is worthy of preservation here:—

Douglas (Young	N	orv	val)	)			Edwin Forrest.
LORD RANDOLPH							Frederick Wheatley.
GLENALVON							William B. Wood.
OLD NORVAL .							William Warren.
LADY RANDOLPH							Mrs. H. A. Williams.
Anna							Mrs. Joseph Jefferson.

Mrs. Williams is better remembered as Mrs. Robert Maywood; Frederick Wheatley was the father of William and Emma Wheatley (Mrs. Mason); William Warren was the father of William Warren, so well known in Boston to-day; and Mrs. Jefferson was the grandmother of the present Joseph Jefferson.

It seems incredible that Edwin Forrest was only four-

teen years old at this time. So much experience had been his, so much had been accomplished, that it appears more than likely that William Wood was right when he said that the *débutant* was "sixteen years of age." Even adding these disputed years to his life, we have a marvel of achievement without a parallel. He was yet to pass through a severe experience before gaining a fixed place upon the stage; but he had demonstrated his fitness, he had proved his claim to merit, and convinced his friends of the metal that was in him.

Still retaining his place in his shop, Forrest devoted his spare hours to study, under the advice and direction of wise friends. He was allowed to reappear, December 29th, as Frederick, in "Lovers' Vows," repeating his first success; and on the 8th of January, 1821, he benefited as Octavian, in "The Mountaineers," a play associated with the early glories of Edmund Kean. In this year, also, he made his first and only venture as a manager, boldly taking the Prune Street Theatre and giving a successful performance of Richard the Third. which not only pleased the audience, but brought him in a few dollars of profit. He made many attempts to secure a regular engagement in one of the Western circuits, where experience could be gained, and at last, after many denials, he was employed by Collins and Jones to play leading juvenile parts in their theatres in Pittsburg, Cincinnati, and Lexington. Thus, at the age of sixteen or eighteen, Edwin Forrest enrolled himself as a regular member of a theatrical company, and broke loose from trade forever.

Glancing back over this part of his life, we must stop to mark how persistent was the forward progress, how unfaltering the purpose, and how steady the stride towards fame and success of the young ship-chandler's He had a good common-school educaapprentice. tion, nothing more; but a brave heart, an iron will, and impulses which struggled towards the highest in all his aims. He had already gained the friendship of such men as John Swift, and Alexander Wilson the celebrated ornithologist, who took a deep interest in the struggling lad, and gave him aid and encouragement. He had not permitted his bias for the theatre to interfere with the duty which bound him to do his share in providing for the family left destitute by his father's death. He was a good son to a noble mother, and a good brother to his other kin, while his soul chafed against the bars which shut him out from his true career, and tied him to the desk where his galling routine lay. His achievements were already of no mean order, as we have seen. He had laid the foundations of his future career with much sagacity, and gave every assurance that the boy would become the father of the man.

Although he had disappointed the fond anticipations of his mother, who had in fancy seen her beloved son in priest's orders, she must have found solace in the conviction that one who had so properly carried out the duties of a son must of necessity be guided towards the right, however wide of his parents' plans his career might be.

#### CHAPTER III.

#### THE STROLLER.

IDDING farewell to home and family, to friends and companions, Edwin Forrest crossed the Alleghany Mountains to begin at Pittsburg, in October, 1822, the serious business of his life. His path, which hitherto had lain along pleasant places, was now to widen into that crowded thoroughfare where man jostles man in the struggle for the goal, and along which are strewn the bodies of the many who faint and fall by the way. His endowments were youth, good health, high spirits, and a superb physique, - qualities essential to success in any calling, but particularly so in the race for histrionic honors. He had seen the best models, he had sat at the feet of the greatest masters of his art then known in any land; he had tasted the sweets of popularity early, and had found savor therein. was now to set out upon a new venture. The amateur had filled his cup of happiness with the admiration which is spontaneously given; he had gained thunders of applause for his unpaid labors, but was now to begin his work in earnest, and to toil for bread. He was destined to find his honors well earned ere they were gained, his bread dearly bought before it reached his lips.

The life of a strolling player in 1881 is not a comfortable one; in 1821 it must have been simply miserable vagabondage, where the stroller shared with the gypsy the shelter of the hedge, with the beggar sometimes the broken crust; where cuffs and stripes and sorrows were plenty, and God's sunny blessings few and far between. If we could look into the theatre in which Forrest's professional life began, we would see no such temple as that which testifies to the wealth, the culture, and the love of the drama shown in the Pittsburg of today. In 1822 the city must have confined its theatrical desires to a very humble abode for the Muse of Tragedy, - a dark and dingy place, full of holes and corners, where old shadows lurked, and where the ghosts of the old plays, so often laid, still walked and moved and had their shadowy being.

With a salary of eight dollars a week, Edwin Forrest began his regular stage life; opening in October, 1822, as Young Norval in "Douglas," that respectably dull, old versified story, which has long since passed into oblivion as an acting play, and is to be found only in the collections of the antiquarians of the stage. None of his companions at this period had won great fame, although many of them were excellent actors, and the company as a whole was more than commonly good, — one that would compare favorably in numbers and in merit with any of the travelling troupes of to-day. During the journey over the mountains, Forrest made the acquaintance of Simon Cameron, then a youth like himself, and formed a friendship which was resumed in later years, to last until the actor's death. This intimacy shows the

hold Forrest was beginning to take upon men of position and intelligence. Mutual attraction united them, mutual tastes held them together.

Of this brief Pittsburg season we know nothing, but we may surmise that it brought little profit to the management, for it soon came to an end. Forrest had played a varied list of parts, ranging from broad comedy to high tragedy, and in all of them had given signs of great promise. Leaving the Iron City, the little band embarked for Cincinnati, going by flat-boat down the Ohio River, — a journey we can imagine to have been made cheerful by the glad youthful spirits of the young actor and his companions, to whom the experiences were so new. Exhilarated by the influences of Nature, which in that region is always bountiful of her blessings, and enlivened by songs and glees and merry tales, repeated under the noonday sun of autumn as they drifted along, we may be sure that the hours passed swiftly and joyously by. Always a good raconteur and mimic, the present occasion brought out all the best resources of the young wanderer. Here he could freely indulge in that taste for comedy which always has been the passion of every tragedian in the opening of his career, and in the display of those comic powers that had been denied him before the foot-lights. Past fertile fields, by vine-clad slopes sunny with the lustre of the grape, halting at young clearings, the abode of the few who had come from the wilderness to lay the cornerstones of future cities on the placid bosom of the broad Ohio, this freight of happy souls bore onward, lighthearted, to their destination. Many a night when all

his companions were asleep, and all the laughter hushed, the lad who had so lately left his mother's side bethought him of that mother and of her teachings, and with tearful eyes and reverent heart he knelt in prayer for the welfare of that dear absent one, asking that her spirit might be with her wandering son in all his journeyings, and that her precepts might never be neglected or forgotten.

Reaching Maysville, Kentucky, after many days, the little band landed, and with their precious freight of baggage-properties, and such small shreds of scenery as they used to transport in those days when few theatres were decently provided, they found a temple waiting them not unlike that which they had left; but they were greeted by the warm Kentucky hearts and open generous hands for which the descendants of the pioneers of that State are still so famous. For five nights the company entertained their new patrons, Forrest making many friends the while, and then went to Lexington, - a broader field and more distinguished arena than any in which he had yet appeared. Lexington was then, as now, the capital centre of the State. telligent love of the drama has ever marked the people who live beyond the great rivers of the West. Leading as they do, during a large part of the year, an agricultural life, watching carefully their great landed interests, they find time nevertheless for reading and mental enjoyment and improvement, and great pleasure in their occasional visits to their cities and the theatres they contain. The drama has always been their chief delight, and when the theatre was poorly supported, even

in the larger and older cities of the East, the principal towns of Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, and Georgia, as well as those of the Carolinas, sustained liberally companies of a high order of excellence.

Before the beauty and intelligence of Lexington Edwin Forrest now appeared, and was met by a criticism discerning and refining, which ripened his perceptions, stimulated him, and opened up to him a new avenue in his work which had hitherto been closed. As has been shown, none of the theatres of that day were well furnished. It was deemed unnecessary to decorate the stage, and therefore with meagre appliances, in such poor robes as his poverty compelled him to wear, but with a soul within him which asked no favor of Fortune, Edwin Forrest entered upon his first important performances of the higher rôles of the standard drama. He followed tradition here, and took up the characters which must always have some feeling representative, so long as the taste for the grand old dramatists survives. He soon attracted the attention of one of the leading men of mind in the South, -President Holley, of the University near Lexington, an able critic, a ripe scholar, a man of refined tastes, and an enthusiastic lover of the theatre, who gave Forrest good counsel that was of great service to him, and inspired him to renewed study of his profession. It was to this noble pioneer in the cause of education that Forrest was indebted for the advice which led him finally to abandon comedy, and to devote his time and attention to tragedy alone, to aim at lofty ideals in his private as well as in his public life, and to remember that the character of the man will ever color the work of the artist; supplementing these with other teachings for his advancement and improvement, that could only have come from a man so pure and lofty in spirit as was President Holley.

At last the happy season came to a close, the goodbyes to Lexington were spoken, and the strollers once more set out for other scenes and fresh adventures. The ladies of the company rode in covered vans or carts, perched upon the scenery or the baggage; the gentlemen went on foot. Their destination was Cincinnati, then, as now, the Queen City of the West. This was the promised land of the wanderers, towards which all their steps had slowly tended, the end of all their journeyings.

In February, 1823, they opened at the Columbia Street Theatre, in "The Soldier's Daughter;" Forrest playing the very humble part of Young Malfort, a sad youth, the hero of the heavy sentiment, who is introduced to give weight and solemnity to a very charming comedy. This was Forrest's first appearance in Cincinnati, a city to which after many years he was to return in triumph, and recall with many a smile the events which we are now tracing. The description of one theatre in the early days of those Western cities will suffice for all. The state of the drama, its patronage, and the style of plays produced, were with trifling exceptions identical in all these places.

At this period in Forrest's career it may be said with certainty that the romance, if such it may be called, of his life as a stroller came to an end, and the actual prose

began. Travel and the novelty of new scenes and incidents had deadened the sense of suffering which accompanied the earlier struggles, and a refreshing sleep after a day of toil and denial was still the boon allowed to the wandering actor, in which some sweet dream of rich comfort, of luxurious home, would banish the stern reality of the day gone by, and fortify the soul against the labors of the day to come. These consolations, poor though they were, which had sprung from a light heart, entertained by the variety and ever-changing scenes of his late experiences, were now to end. The duties of the theatre grew more severe. A change of bill nightly necessitated fresh and increasing work; new parts demanded new wardrobes, or old garments patched and transformed; while particular lines of business and the exclusive claim to a certain range of characters gratifying to the performer were all swept away in the demands for what was felt to be the greatest good for the greatest number. The serious hero of the opening play was often the ballet-dancer of the after-piece, or the painted clown who sang a comic song between drama and farce. Doffing the plaid and the dirk of Young Norval, Edwin had even put on the many-colored garments of the Virginia negro, had given his audiences a break-down or a walk-around in true plantation style, before Daddy Rice, the great "Jim Crow," was known to the stage at all.

As a matter of curiosity, we give here portions of an advertisement from the *Cincinnati Independent Press*, dated July 17, 1823, showing Forrest's position on the stage at that time.

#### GLOBE THEATRE - THREE NEW PIECES.

The public are respectfully informed that the new petit comedy of "Dandyism; or, Modern Fashions," having been received with distinguished approbation, according to the wish of many citizens will be repeated. An original interlude, called "The Tailor in Distress; or, A Yankee Trick," will also be brought forward, and those two will be followed by the grand pantomimic spectacle of "Don Quixote," which has been in preparation for several weeks. The performance will positively begin at 10 minutes before 8, and close before 12 o'clock.

#### ON THIS EVENING, JULY 17,

will be presented (for the second and last time) the petit comedy of

## DANDYISM; OR, MODERN FASHIONS.

Mr. WILSON.								٠			Mr. Cargill.
FRANK FREELO	VE										Davis.
BILL SHUFFLE			. 1		Two	mo	ode	rn	5		Scott.
BILL SHUFFLE TOM TIPPLE.			. \$		da	and	ies.		1		Forrest.
Post Boy, also	TA	ΙL	or'	S	Воу						Miss Hanna.
CHARLOTTE .											Mrs. Cargill.
BETTY BAB .										٠	Miss Riddle.
Mrs. Wilson											Mrs. Hanna.

In Act III.—a Duel between the two dandies (Messrs. Scott and Forrest), in which will be introduced the most modern modes of shunning a bullet, viz. long dodging, short dodging, quick dodging, quizzical dodging, demi-quizzical dodging, and demi-semi-quizzical dodging, after the manner of Cumming and McDuffie, the heroes of the South.

After which an original interlude (founded on fact) called

# THE TAILOR IN DISTRESS; OR, A YANKEE TRICK.

GENERAL			۰.								Mr. Cargill.
SNIP (a tai	lor	of	Pa	ре	ro	ool	is)				Eberle.

Tom (tailor's boy)				Miss Riddle.
CUFFEE (a Kentucky negro)				Mr. Forrest.
Miss Philisy (a negro lady)				

In the course of the interlude Mr. FORREST will give mock imitations of Mr. Phillips's singing.

The evening's entertainment to conclude with the grand heroic pantomime of

# DON QUIXOTE,

with appropriate scenery, dresses, and music.													
	COUNT												Mr. Sweeny.
	COUNTESS												Mrs. Riddle.
	Sancho Panza	(Don	Q	uix	ote	's	squ	iire	:)				Mr. Forrest.
	CAPTAIN OF TH												
	SECOND CAPTAI	N.											Davis.
	SUTLER WOMAN												
	Don Quixote												Scott.
	FIRST TRAVELLI	ER .											Cargill.
	SECOND TRAVEL	LER											Giles.
	FIRST MILLER												Lucas.
	SECOND MILLER												George.
	THIRD MILLER												Giles.

At this period Forrest's labors in the theatre were only equalled by his financial sufferings in private life. An accident to his only pair of shoes left him absolutely without a covering for his foot, which he bandaged as if wounded; and limping about for several days he won much sympathy from his companions, who knew not that his distress was in his pocket. The welcome applause that rang in the ears of a Damon or a Pythias sometimes silenced the cries of hunger, warmed the almost naked body, and soothed the wounds of pride. But the little band could not live on the good-will of small audiences alone, and the crash, although long

deferred, came at last to this as to nearly all other theatrical ventures in that virgin field. Collins and Jones, depending upon weak characters in the absence of great ones, after a hard struggle finally succumbed, and the doors of the theatre were suddenly closed, throwing Forrest and his companions out of employment.

He had gained by this his first regular engagement some local fame, not a little valuable experience, and the friendship of a number of good men who saw promises of future excellence in the lad, and were not slow to encourage it. Among these the most valuable, perhaps, was the veteran General, afterwards President, Harrison. This gentle heart beat with pure pity as he heard the young stroller's stories of his trials; and his active friendship on many occasions lightened the burdens which the youth was carrying.

In the upper part of a barn in the city of Hamilton, all that was left of the wreck of the company of Collins and Jones met again to face another failure and another journey: this time to Lebanon, with the same sad experiences, and then to Dayton, disaster following disaster, where the union was finally and totally dissolved. Penniless, hungry, poorly clad, but hopeful still, Forrest started on foot for Cincinnati, a distance of forty miles. This was one of the severest trials of his life, and in most pathetic language he often alluded to it in after years. Adventures of a gypsy nature were not wanting by the way. He entered a stream, with his poor shoes in his hand, to help his way along by means of the row-boat he saw, apparently without an owner, lying temptingly unfastened on the opposite bank. But a

rough warning to be off, emphasized by the vision of a shot-gun pointing his way, led him to prefer the hard road to the perils of such navigation. At last he found himself once more in the Queen City of the West, poorer than ever, and with no prospect of a brighter future. Chance engagements, with a trifle of salary now and then to keep starvation from his door, a trip to Louisville with the wreck of the Cincinnati company, moderate success there, a return once more to Cincinnati under a new management and with a new enterprise, where at last permanent employment seemed assured, are among the incidents which followed that naked hegira from Dayton.

During these last months in Cincinnati Forrest played Norval, Faffier, George Barnwell, and Richard the Third, besides certain parts in comedy. He was the mainstay of the company, the stock-star, its legitimate leader. In one year the amateur of Philadelphia, in spite of many disasters, became a power in the regular ranks of a Western theatre. This brief interval of success served only to keep the wolf from the door, but gave no margin of surplus, even if the young stroller had been of a saving character. The near and inevitable, the idle future, was still to be cared for. When July came, and with it the closing of the theatres, the strollers separated.

We may here speak of a friendship which, beginning under the shadow of mutual poverty, lasted and grew stronger and more dear under the sun of prosperity. To Mrs. Riddle and her family, actors like himself, Edwin Forrest owed in these dark days much of the hope and encouragement which brighten ad-

versity. Their courtesy and unfailing friendship were the ties which bound him to duty, and kept in his mind the example and precepts of his beloved mother and sisters. The Riddles had passed many years of honorable labor in their profession, had reached respectable positions, and out of their scanty earnings made Edwin feel at home in a circle where happy contentment helped to banish from the hearthstone the pangs of public neglect or private sorrows. To the end of his life, in fame and prosperity, the name of this early benefactress of his was a dear one to his ears, and he never ceased to speak fondly of her and of her memory. One cold winter's day, when the snow lay deep on the graves at Mount Auburn, the writer of these lines stood by Forrest's side as the last rites of the Church were performed over a member of this family, who in his early days had shown herself so kindly and thoroughly his friend. The strong man gazed into the last resting-place of her he had loved so well, and as the winter's sun fell upon that noble head, bared and reverent, the tears rolled unchecked from his eyes, unused to weep. Sweet memories of the happy past mingled with the sad thoughts that this, at last, was the final earthly parting.

The Riddle family had taken a plain cottage at Newport, Kentucky, on the Ohio River, opposite Cincinnati, and here in this enforced and penniless holiday time a place was made for Forrest. They gave him out of their scant store the help they could hardly spare, a bed, and, if nothing more, a kindly welcome; while a neighboring field often supplied the ear of corn,

which, roasted gypsy-like by the hedge-side fire, allayed the pangs of hunger, and brought to him forgetfulness of present misery.

Forrest had now reached the lowest point of his for-Within the first year of his apprenticeship he had tasted the bitterness of hope deferred, the gall of unpaid toil, and suffered the hardest of all wants, the want of food. It is said that at this period, giving up all hope, the tortured, naked, hungry lad, in despair of a brighter day to come, madly dreamed of a sudden and violent end to all his misery. But with that elasticity which happily belongs to great souls destined for great achievements, he passed into a more hopeful and more cheerful mood, when the horizon of his vision became less dark and threatening. With book in hand, - a poorly bound volume of his beloved Shakspere, - he passed whole hours of many days beneath the trees of a neighboring farm, where, pondering over the immortal text, surrounded by all the influences which Nature exerts over sensitive minds, new plans, new purposes, took possession of him. He seemed to catch inspiring glimpses of the destiny that awaited him, and the elation that was born of those musings hallowed the spot to him forever. Looking out through the window of his present poverty into the future day of his splendid prosperity, he vowed that this ground should one day be his own, - an oath he religiously kept, for these very acres were many years after purchased by him, and during his life never passed out of his hands. ground upon which the poor young stroller had snatched so many happy self-forgetting hours of study became

one of the most valued possessions of the successful tragedian, valued for its associations' sake if for nothing more.

While enjoying this hospitality of the Riddles, Forrest had succeeded in making an engagement for the following season with James H. Caldwell, then manager of the most prosperous of all the Southern or Western circuits. His salary was to be eighteen dollars a week, an advance upon his old wages that speaks well for the reputation he had already made; and he was to make his future headquarters at New Orleans, a city already the centre of all that was chivalrous and cultured in the South. At the last moment Forrest was so loath to part with his friends, made doubly dear to him by adversity and mutual tastes, that he would have been willing to have sacrificed even the brilliant opportunities offered to him in New Orleans, if his old friend and manager Sol Smith would have given him a place among his old companions of the West. This was firmly refused, however, Mr. Smith insisting that for his own best interests, as well as for the proper fulfilment of his word, he should go to his Southern engagement. at this denial, full of wrath, and in order effectually to escape the sorrow involved in the parting from his friends, as well as to break with the manager who had a right to his services, and at the same time to affront the manager who had declined them, he joined a circus troupe, and gave surprising evidences of his agility in the ring. Fortune, however, having something better in store for him than the turning of somersaults on the sawdust of a travelling show, led him to listen

once more to the earnest advice of Mr. Smith, who pointed out to him all the advantages that lay before him in the South, appealed to his honor, always a safe and sure guide, and won his consent at last to go to his duty.

### CHAPTER IV.

NEW ORLEANS. — NEW YORK. — HIS FIRST DECIDED SUCCESS.

URING this journey South, over the great rivers, Forrest made the acquaintance of General Winfield Scott and John Howard Payne, in whose society the passage was made only too quickly, for on the 4th day of February, 1824, at the American Theatre, under the management of Caldwell, Forrest made his first bow to a New Orleans audience as *Faffier* in "Venice Preserved," one of the tragedies of the old turgid school, which has vigor and vitality enough still to hold a sort of contested possession of the stage.

New Orleans at this time was the gayest capital in the country, and was alive with entertainments of all kinds. The season lasted from the close of the cotton-picking on the plantations until the coming of Lent. Rich planters with their families, when the crop was gathered, came to the Crescent City for their dissipation. The audience there, then as now, was made up largely of ladies, and their presence gave a refined air to the entertainment. A breathless and noiseless attention took the place of loud applause, and those points were best valued in the actor which were given without

rant, and betrayed a delicate perception of nature in as delicate a form of art.

The influence of French taste was apparent on and off the stage, on the street, and in society. Caldwell was an actor of the impassioned school, a great favorite with the public he had served for many years, and much courted by society, where he shone with natural lustre. He presented Forrest to his new auditors, and the young man's fine figure, youthful presence, and noble voice made an instant impression; his open and frank bearing, which disdained criticism, removing somewhat the taint of provincialism which had early shown itself in the actor's robust style. This style could have been modified in the presence of so cultured and delicate an audience had Forrest submitted himself freely to its influence; but his career was here too stormy and too brief, his tastes too mature, to admit of the complete reform which might have taken place to his advantage.

His associates, if we may trust his biographers, were not of a character to purify his nature or refine his manners. While an awful curiosity hovers about the inventor who gave his name to the bowie-knife, it seems unreasonable to attach any great importance to the friendship of the man upon that ground alone. He may have had qualities mitigating the ferocity which characterized his many bloody contests at arms, but these are not dwelt upon, and the only advantage which Forrest ever reaped from this intimacy was the possession of the identical knife which had played so prominent a part in the hands of Colonel Bowie. At

least this is all the benefit which his biographers have shown as growing out of their friendship. At no time of Edwin Forrest's life did he need masculine or barbarian influence, - he always had a surplus in that direction, - and it would have been better for him could he have drawn his inspiration from the gentle and refining spirits which have ever animated the audiences and society of the Crescent City. He made his choice, and selected the coterie which was most congenial to him. We see in this no natural outcropping of a "Democratic" spirit; rather the haughty conceit of the self-made man who scorned to submit to judicious training. With Bowie, with a large-hearted, powerfully built, fighting steamboat captain (whose best exploit was not in conquering a crowd of loafers by his muscle, but in the tenderness of his care of Forrest when ill of the fever), with Push-ma-ta-ha, the Indian who is said to have suggested the production of "Metamora," and with other original spirits like these, Forrest passed his unoccupied time in New Orleans. They charmed the young athlete by their novel freedom, and he was too full of the warm blood of the barbarian himself to resist their fascination.

Of his professional progress here we have but poor accounts. He seems to have been very popular, and to have had an experience larger than he had heretofore enjoyed. He played with the elder Conway, and was affected by the grandeur of that actor's *Othello*, — a study which served Forrest well when in later years he inherited the character. This actor was in a degree associated with the days of Samuel Johnson, by the

preference which the widow of Thrale and the wife of Piozzi had shown him when he first appeared in London. He was a man of remarkable physical beauty, and the old lady became his ardent admirer. Her susceptibility created much amusement among her friends; but the association was valuable to Conway, as it brought him into public notice through the aid of a powerful literary clique. He drowned himself in Charleston Harbor during a temporary fit of insanity, in 1828.

Forrest's engagement with Caldwell had taken him to Petersburg, Norfolk, and Richmond, then back again to New Orleans. While at Richmond he attracted the attention and made the personal acquaintance of the venerable Chief Justice Marshall. He saw the patriot Lafayette, then revisiting the scenes of his impulsive and ardent youth, and receiving the warm welcome which was everywhere paid to him. Forrest returned to New Orleans in 1825, reopening as Young Malfort, in the "Soldier's Daughter," a part which seemed to have fastened to him, he played it so often, even when engaged for better things. In March he supported Conway, playing Iago. In May he announced for his benefit "King Lear." The performance was postponed on account of the weather, and when it did take place he gave "The Mountaineers" instead of the Shaksperean tragedy. The season closed at the end of May. During this latter month he had given his first performance of Brutus, in Howard Payne's drama, a part in which he became famous in after years, given up only when his strength and agility were failing him.

A quarrel with his manager, who seems to have envied

his success with the public, or so Forrest believed; his first serious love affair; and an attack of yellow fever of which he nearly died, and from which he was rescued by the care of his friend Graham, the steamboat captain, - are the leading incidents of his later New Orleans career. Jane Placide, who inspired the first love of Edwin Forrest, combined talent, beauty, and goodness. Her name was an honorable one, and the affection with which she filled the young actor's heart might have proved the blessed experience of his life, could she have returned it. Her character would have softened the asperities of his, and led him by a calmer path to those grand elevations towards which Providence had directed his footsteps. Baffled in his love, and believing Caldwell to be his rival and enemy, he challenged him, but was rebuked by the silent contempt of his manager, whom the impulsive and disappointed lover "posted." He then betook himself to the wigwam of his Indian friend, where, in commune with a nature new and fascinating, he sought solace for his disappointment. In the study of his model for "Metamora" he learned to forget the pangs of his refusal, and Pushma-ta-ha by the wigwam fire consoled his pale-faced friend with the history of his own wild loves.

Returning to New Orleans in August, as poor as when he left it, Forrest secured a passage in a sailing ship for New York, was nearly caught in the teeth of a shark while bathing in the Gulf, but escaped miraculously, and arrived home at last after an absence of three years of enough drudgery and adventure to fill a life, and with a varied experience which colored his

whole career. He had not forgotten his home in his absence. He had sent to the dear ones from time to time such sums as he could spare from his little store; and he found them now all joy, eagerly expectant to see and to welcome him whose fame had already reached the humble dwelling and filled the widowed mother's heart with pride.

The hard novitiate of Edwin Forrest was now drawing near its close. Securing a stock engagement with Charles Gilfert, manager of the Albany Theatre, he opened there in the early fall, and played for the first time with Edmund Kean, then on his second visit to this country. The meeting with this extraordinary man, and the attentions he received from him, were among the directing influences of Forrest's life. To his last hour he never wearied of singing the praises of Kean, whose genius filled the English-speaking world with admiration. Two men more unlike in mind and body can scarcely be imagined. Kean, who had come up from his early sufferings into that prosperity which crazed him, bore upon his delicate frame the marks of the struggle. The fire of genius still dwelt in that eye which could melt with tenderness in the passion of Romeo, or flash with the lurid fires of jealousy as the "dusky Moor." He had passed over the soil yet virgin to his young admirer, and he bore the sad marks of his bitter travail. Transformed from the certain misery of a provincial career whose rewards were beggarly into the dazzling glory of a London triumph, Kean spanned at one bound the interval which separates luxury from want, wealth from poverty. But he

was more true to his earlier instincts than sensitive to his later possibilities. The spark which filled the stage with its divine radiance consumed the frame which emitted it, and he who swayed admiring audiences by his sublime powers became at last the victim of passions too late subjected to restraint. The early life of Edmund Kean, passed in the midst of social prejudices which outlawed the player, was the last sad and awful protest against the injustice and ignorance of an era which placed the genius of the actor among the glories of mankind, while the man himself was socially neglected and contemned.

Until now Forrest had seen no actor who represented in perfection the impassioned school of which Kean was the master. He had known Cooke in the decline of his powers, but his own judgment was immature. Here was indeed a revelation. How must his mind have grown in the study of that style which grasped the innermost of the passions and flashed out its expression with the spark divine, through a frame slender but magnetic. In later life Forrest loved to recall those impressions, and a lock of the great actor's hair was tenderly preserved amongst his most valued treasures. He played Iago to his Othello, Titus to his Brutus, and Richmond to his Richard III. The season at Albany ended in disaster: the actor's wardrobe was in pawn; but he went to Philadelphia to play for his old friend Porter's benefit, and his return to his native city was made happy by the success of his performance of Faffier on this occasion. He was called upon to repeat it, and for two nights he tasted the first sweets of his coming starring glories. His last hours of slavery, which we will briefly notice, were now at hand. Gilfert had assumed the management of the Bowery Theatre, New York, under the board of directors with Prosper M. Wetmore at their head, who were building that now venerable edifice. Forrest was engaged for one year, at a salary of twenty-eight dollars per week.

In the interval which preceded the opening of the theatre, Forrest appeared at the Park, for the benefit of Woodhull, playing *Othello*. He made a pronounced success, his old manager, sitting in front, profanely exclaiming, "By God, the boy has made a hit!" This was a great event, as the Park was then the leading theatre of America, and its actors the most exclusive and estimable. He played a few nights also at Baltimore and Washington, and again passed a short time with his beloved mother, to whose careful love and sterling character he owed so much, and towards whom his filial love was constant to the end.

He opened at the Bowery Theatre in November, 1826, as *Othello*, and made a brilliant impression. His salary was raised at once from twenty-eight dollars to forty dollars per week. From this success may be traced the first absolute hold made by Edwin Forrest upon the attention of cultivated auditors and intelligent critics. The "Bowery" was then a very different theatre from what it afterwards became, when the newsboys took forcible possession of its pit and the fire laddies were the arbiters of public taste in its neighborhood. The royal days of Eddy and the large-footed, loud-voiced tragedians were yet to come. The suc-

cessors of Hamblin were of a melodramatic school which would have caused the great tragedian to smile. Forrest's success was the beginning of a metropolitan reputation which extended over forty years of service. It was here he gained the friendship of those men, eminent in that day as the leaders of public opinion in theatrical affairs, the journalists and writers whose kindly but well-digested opinions aided him in fixing his conceptions and perfecting his style. To James Lawson and Leggett, of the Post, he owed a debt which he afterwards paid with interest. A pleasant instance of Forrest's moral integrity may be told here. He had been approached by a rival manager, after his first success, and urged to secede from the "Bowery" and join the other house at a much larger salary. He scornfully refused to break his word, although his own interests must suffer.

His popularity at this time was so great that he was often loaned to the other theatres by Gilfert, who demanded two hundred dollars a night for his services, while paying Forrest only forty dollars a week. When his contract for the season had expired, and Gilfert approached him for a renewal for another year, he replied that he would willingly remain for the valuation which Gilfert himself had placed upon him. He was instantly engaged for eighty nights, at a salary of two hundred dollars a night. This virtually closed his stock career, and was the first great advance he had made towards that giddy height from which he could not now be kept back. From the unfavorable surroundings of his early life, from the hard school of

adversity, Forrest had already emerged, and was moving surely towards the grand development of his great powers, forming his style upon the best models of the robust school which Cooper and Conway had brought over from the Kembles, modified and softened by the acting of Edmund Kean, who had flashed so lately like a meteor across his startled vision.

# CHAPTER V.

#### HIS VISITS TO EUROPE.

DWIN FORREST, according to his biographers. had just passed his twenty-first birthday. He was entering thus early upon a career such as few actors had ever known. His health was excellent, his vigor unimpaired by excesses, and he might have posed for one of the Olympian victors, so remarkable was his physique. His open, frank nature was as yet unwarped by injustice and malignity, still unspoiled by souring adversities or sickened by satiety. He was admirably suited to carry onward the traditions of the stage as they descended to him; and he was destined to be their best exponent in the coming years. bound he seemed to overleap all barriers; and he not only vaulted to a high position early in life, but never once fell backward. His rivals, on the other hand, were ascending by more toilsome grades the heights, at the top of which they beheld him who had so miraculously surmounted them all. He had passed through his theatrical drudgery in a few brief years, - endured in agony, but remembered with satisfaction. In that early day of the American theatre the actor was not only received with applause behind the footlights, but





was an object of admiring curiosity in private life. He shared with other public characters that most trying of all ordeals, the praise of the street, the openly uttered tribute of the passer-by. That such influences are to-day much modified is well for the actor, since they undoubtedly affected the bearing of Forrest and other players of his time, giving them the air of being always on parade before, as well as behind, the scenes. The writer can remember when the presence of Forrest upon Broadway attracted marked attention from friend and foe, and led to a free exchange of opinions upon his appearance, expressions of admiration or condemnation being as vigorously offered as if in the theatre itself.

Like all men who succeed in the pursuit of a difficult profession, he met with violent opposition, - the more violent in his case, because his advance had been so rapid and uninterrupted, and his upward course so steadily pursued, that rivalry was baffled by his industry. Denying himself now the indulgences which were the ruin of his fellows, he did not share their convivial hours, but shunned the paths in which they were blindly travelling. We can find him at this period of his life devoting himself to every research which tends to the elevation and improvement of the mind. eagerly studied books and men, and gained, by application and self-denial, that precedence which he never lost. If ever a man owed all he had acquired to the theatre, it was Edwin Forrest. He was its child; within its walls all his experience of life had been gained, and through its literature his mind had acquired almost the only growth it ever knew.

The retirement of Cooper left the stage to a band of actors formed upon his style. Their names have long since been forgotten; but in absolute fitness for their profession, in all the requirements for the characters which each adopted, these early rivals of Forrest in his starring career were foemen worthy of his steel, — his equals in all things save constancy of will and fixedness of purpose. From what is known to us of Augustus Addams, he must have been an actor of uncommon force. He was the idol of his audiences, and held an equal place with Forrest for a time in the estimation of play-goers. With a fine and graceful physique, a voice of great sweetness and power, and a keen comprehension of character, he made a great impression in such heroic parts as Damon, Virginius, and Pierre. He died at an age when his powers should have been in their prime, a victim of that influence with which a public so often suffocates, while embracing, its idol, - popular applause. He was one of the greatest of Forrest's competitors.

Another rival was John R. Scott, who displayed such power that it was said of him by *The Times*, when he appeared in London, that no actor possessing so many beauties and so many faults had ever been seen upon the English stage. Had he been true to himself, he would undoubtedly have sternly contested the palm of superiority with Forrest. To the actors of to-day, educated in the modern sensational dramas, the splendor of this company of tragedians seems unreal. The list is too long for classification. It embraces Ingersoll, "the silver-tongued," whose early manhood was

the springtime of a glorious harvest destined never to ripen; Charles Webb, Charles Eaton, and a long array of noble names, which are now only to be found upon tombstones, too early erected over their golden promise. That they did not hold out to the end is a sad reflection,—they were so gifted, so generous, and might have done so much for an art which repays industry so liberally. He only reached the goal who had avoided their errors and profited by their example.

The success which had greeted Forrest on his first appearance in New York was renewed in every city in the land. In Boston, where the people are proverbially slow to admit new candidates to their regard, he sprang into favor at once; and he writes to his mother in great glee at having gained a reputation in "the Modern Athens." Fortune attended fame, and filled his pockets as the breath of adulation filled his heart. Generous and open in all things else, he was yet cautious in his money affairs, and soon laid aside a sum with which to purchase a home for his beloved mother and sisters. When he had paid the last penny of debt left by his father, and had seen the shelter raised over the head of his living family, he rejoiced in the goodness of that Providence which had led him by so many thorny paths into the road where roses bloomed and the laurel grew. In every city he began now to make valuable friends, of a class whose culture and experience aided his studies, while they stimulated his pride. Here was inaugurated that friendship with James Oakes, which only ceased when the grave closed over the lifeless clay of Forrest; while with Barry Taylor, of Kentucky, he

formed a friendship which was at all times an inspiration and a delight.

With a patriotic love for all things American, Forrest formed a plan for the encouragement or development of an American drama, which resulted in heavy money losses to himself, but produced such contributions to our stage literature as the "Gladiator," "Jack Cade," and "Metamora." He was laughed at for his pains, and his outlay in money was the penalty he paid for his generous belief in the ability of his countrymen to create a drama that was to be purely national.

After five years of constant labor he felt that he had earned the right to a holiday, and he formed his plans for a two years' absence in Europe. His fame had preceded him: he had several offers to appear professionally; but he was determined that study and observation should be his only employment in the Old World. A farewell banquet was tendered him by the citizens of New York, and a brilliant assemblage gathered to speak the words of cheer and bon voyage, and give the young actor a substantial proof of the loving estimation in which he was held by his countrymen. A medal was struck in honor of the occasion. Bryant, Halleck, Leggett, Ingraham, and other distinguished men were present. The affair was a gratifying one, and an honor which had never before been paid to an American actor.

In July, 1834, he sailed in the good ship "Sully" for Europe, bidding farewell to the land of his birth, which had given him fame and fortune, and for which he entertained a Roman's love of country. Landing at Havre, he went directly to Paris, to enjoy the wonders of that glittering capital, so dazzling to the traveller who looks upon her for the first time that all the senses are lost in that of admiration. Louis Philippe, the Citizen King, was on the throne, and to him the young Democrat was presented, standing somewhat reluctantly in a deferential attitude before a royalty which in his heart he despised. His only royalties were those of God's creating, - genius and endeavor. Upon the tomb of Talma he laid a laurel wreath, feeling sincere reverence for the man who had ennobled his calling, and who, while sharing the close friendship of the great Napoleon, to whom he had shown kindness when kindness was rare to that child of Destiny, refused to accept any favor at his hands in his hours of triumph. Among those who stood at the brilliant receptions at the Tuileries, dukes and marshals, princes and queens, the dignified form of Talma could be seen honored by the smile of him before whose few gifts nobility cringed and genius degraded itself. Forrest admired Mademoiselle Mars as the first real comédienne he had seen, and even in the awkward display of an amateur conservatoire performance he detected the genius which afterwards dazzled the world in the person of Rachel. Passing on through Italy, across the Alps, he stood beside the gate of Altorf; he climbed the peaks immortalized by Tell, and there, amid the solitudes where Swiss liberty was born, he shouted with wild pleasure the lines which Knowles has put in that hero's mouth: -

"Ye crags and peaks, I'm with ye once again, I call to you, with all my voice; I hold To you the hands you first beheld, to show They still are free."

Actors are usually dreamers, and how must Forrest have enjoyed his realization of all his early visions and ambitions, as he saw the scenes through which he had passed in mimic life. No tourist ever visits the wonders of the Old World with the same childish delight which fills the actor's soul who sees them for the first time. With every spot the name of Shakspere is associated, some incident or line suggesting his presence in those sacred scenes. To stand in Venice and recall the words of the Moor; to fancy he can see here the footprints of that hero, beside whose imaginative glory the actual deeds of a Dandolo or a Foscari pale into insignificance; to cross the bridge whereon Antonio had "many a time and oft" rated old Shylock "about his moneys and his usances," - this is to find among those scenes, beside those wave-washed palaces, such realities as history cannot furnish. Contrasting his present place and future hopes with those to which in his youth he seemed destined. Forrest must have felt a rising in the throat which choked all utterance.

He went to Poland and to Moscow; to Constantinople, the wretched remains of the proudest empire ever built upon the miseries of mankind; across the Euxine into Asia Minor; to Africa; to Naples, visiting the tomb of Juliet; and at last he set his foot upon the motherland, that shore inlaid with the mosaic of poetry and history, consecrated to all that is grand in the past of that race from which we draw our language, our glory, and the basis of our laws, the land of Shakspere, the birthplace of our drama, the nursery of Burbage, of Betterton, of Garrick, Macready, Kean, and all the

Kembles, the green fields, the smiling villages, the historic associations, all clustered around the magic name, England.

Here he found himself surrounded by many friends awaiting to do him honor and urging him to act. He yielded so far to this pressure as to consent to return at once from America, to which he must now depart. He had been absent two years when he landed in New York, early in September, 1836. He was welcomed by his many admirers with all the enthusiasm of friendship, and he arranged to play two engagements during the brief stay he was to make before his return to London.

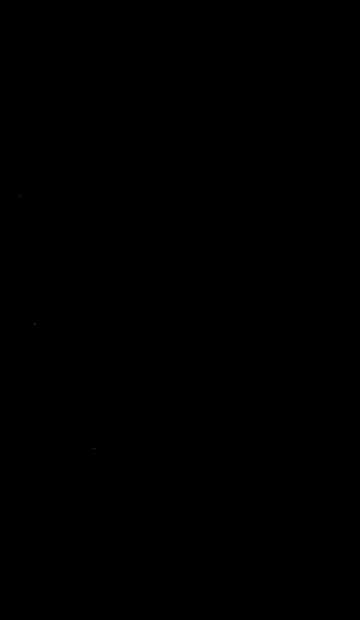
His reappearance at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in September, was the occasion of an ovation in every respect. Hundreds were turned away from the doors, and the neighborhood of the theatre was thronged with those who had failed to gain admittance. He played Damon, and, on his entrance, a demonstration took place unusual even in a theatre, where applause is so common. Men rose to their feet and cheered, ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and it was some minutes before the tumult of welcome subsided and the play was allowed to proceed. His speech at the close evoked fresh enthusiasm. He gave six performances only on this occasion, and each saw a repetition of the scene at the beginning of the engagement. The receipts were the largest ever known in that theatre. His return to his native city under such circumstances, and the rapturous welcome given him, where those he loved could share in his pride, touched him deeply. He

bade farewell to New York in six performances, immediately following those given in Philadelphia, and his reception in that city was equally flattering. The scenes at the doors were repeated, while the enthusiasm of the audience seemed to pass all bounds. He played "Othello," "Lear," "Damon and Pythias," "Hamlet," "Rolla," "Metamora," and "Virginius," and was supported by such artists as John H. Clarke (as Iago), John Mason (as Macduff), Peter Richings (as King Claudius), Henry Placide (as Polonius), William H. Chippendale (as the Grave-digger), W. S. Fredericks (as Kent), Mrs. Sharpe (as Emelia and Ophelia), Mrs. Richardson (as Desdemona), and Miss Charlotte Cushman (as Queen Gertrude and Goneril). He was paid five hundred dollars per night, and the receipts were about fifteen hundred dollars, which left a large margin of profit to the delighted manager of the Park.

On the 19th of September, 1836, Forrest embarked once more for the mother-country, this time with serious purpose. After a speedy and uneventful passage he reached England, and at once set about the preliminary business of his British engagement, which began October 17, 1836. He was the first really great American actor who had appeared in London as a rival of the English tragedians; for Cooper was born in England, though always regarded as belonging to the younger country.

A brief summary only will be given here of this engagement; it will again be touched upon when we come to speak of other performances in Great Britain, and the incidents which grew out of them at home and abroad.





First Appearance of the celebrated
Mr. EDWIN FORREST,
THE EMINENT AMERICAN TRAGEDIAN.

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

This Evening, MONDAY, October 17th, 1836.
Their Majesties' Servents will perform (1st Time on the English Stage) a Tragedy in Five Acts, entitled

# THE GLADIATOR

With New Scenery (by the Mossys, GRIEVE). Now Dreams, and Decorations.

Marcus Crassus, (Urban Practor)
Mr. WARDE,
Gellius, (Consul) Mr. F. COOKE.
Lentulus, Mr. HOOPER.

Jovius, (a Centurion) Mr. BARTLEY.

Braschius, Mr. MATHEWS, Florus, Mr. BRINDAL, Spartacus, - - - Mr. EDWIN FORREST,

Who will have the honor, on this occasion, of making his First Appearance on the British Stage
Phasarius, (Brother to Spartacus) Mr. COOPER,

Enemaus, Mr. BAKER, Crixus, Mr. DURUSET, Mummius, Mr. MEARS, Scropha, Mr. HONNER.

Boy, Miss MARSHALL, Centurion, Mr. T. MATTHEWS.
Julia, (Niece to Crassus) Mrs. HOOPER,—her 1st Appearance,

Senona, (Wife of Spartacus) Miss H U D D A R T,-1st Appearance these 5 Years

A ROMAN STREET. THE HOUSE OF CRASSUS.

A ROMAN AMPHITHEATRE!
The Plain of Pæstum after the Battle

THE TENT OF CRASSUS. CAMP OF SPARTACUS.

STREET LEADING TO THE PRÆTORIUM

Retreat of Spartacus, near Rhegium!

THE BAND WILL PLAY THE OVERTURE TO "ANACREON."

The Evening's Performances will terminate with (2nd Time at this Theatre) the Farce of

SCAN. MAG.

Mr. Theodore Singleton, Mr. BARTLEY, Edward Singleton, Mr. HOOPER, Capt Tinderly, Mr. BAKER Tomay Candle, Mr. MEADOWS, John Grub, Mr. BEDFORD, Bendle, Mr. T. MATTHEWS, Emily Singleton, Mrs. VINING, Fauny, Mrs. HUMBY, Julia, Miss LEE, Mrs. Caudle, Mrs. C. JONES.

To-morrow, Shakspeare's Comedy of AS YOU LIKE IT. Orlando, Mr. Cooper, Jaques, Mr. Wards
Amieus, Mr. Wilson, Adam, Mr. Bartley, Touchstone, Mr. Mendows, Rosafnod, Miss Taylor,
(her First Appearance these Two Years) Andrey, Mrs. Hamby. After which, (First Time
at Half-Price) Balfo's Grand Original Opera of

THE SIEGE OF ROCHELLE!

On Wednesday, a Tragody in which Mr. EDWIN FORREST will appear.
On Thursday, will be produced (for the First Time) a Drama, in Three Acts, to be entitled

The Duchess's Ormand.

The Duchess of Ormond, . Miss HUDDART.

After which will herevived, WITH ALL ITS ORIGINAL SPLENDOUR.

THE JEWESS!

On Friday, a Tragedy in which Mr. EDWIN FORREST will appear.

Mr. BALFE

will appear in his own Opera of The Siege of Rockelle, To-morrow Evening, and will immediately afterwards appear IN A NEW GRAND OPERA!



His opening part was *Spartacus*, in the "Gladiator." The play was condemned, the actor applauded. In spite of the special fitness which he showed for this character, he was not able to make it acceptable to the English public. They acknowledged the vigor of his style, the ruggedness of his methods, and appreciated all the magnetic qualities of the man; but it was in his Shaksperean performances that they recognized and confessed his fitness to take the place of their own great actors. In *Othello*, in *Lear*, and in *Macbeth* he won instant fame. The audience gave their applause spontaneously, and the press generally spoke in his favor. The part of *Damon*, however, was declared to be beneath his powers.

He began his engagement October 17, and closed December 19, having acted *Macbeth* seven times, *Othello* nine, and *King Lear* eight.

The cast of the "Gladiator," at Drury Lane, October 17, 1836, on the night of Mr. Forrest's first appearance in England, is worthy of preservation. It is not to be found in any of the more extended biographies of the actor.

MARCUS LU	CIN	IU	s (	CRA	\SS	US						Mr. Warde.
GELLIUS .						۰				٠		Mr. F. Cooke.
LENTULUS		۰								٠		Mr. Hooper.
Jorius										0		Mr. Bartley.
BRACCHIUS												Mr. Matthews.
FLORUS .												Mr. Brindal.
SPARTACUS							٠				٠	Mr. E. Forrest.
PHASARIUS							٠	٠				Mr. Cooper.
ENOMAIS .						٠						Mr. Baker.
CRIXUS .												Mr. Duruset.

Mummius												Mr. Mears.
SCROPHA .												Mr. Honner.
Boy												Miss Marshall.
CENTURION												T. Matthews.
Julia (her first appearance)												Mrs. Hooper.
SENONA (he	r fi	rst	apj	pea	rai	nce	in	fiv	еу	ear	s)	Miss Huddart.

Of this occasion the London Times, October 18, 1836, wrote:—

"DRURY LANE THEATRE. - Mr. Edwin Forrest, who has established a high reputation in America, his native country, as a tragedian, appeared for the first time before an English audience at this theatre last night. The character selected for his début was that of Spartacus, in the tragedy of that title, written by Mr. Bird, also an Amer-Mr. Forrest was received with hearty warmth, which from the first moment of his appearance left no doubt, if any could have been entertained, that the audience were well disposed to accept his exertions for their entertainment. He is a tall, rather robust man, of some thirty years of age, not remarkably handsome, but with expressive features and that cast of countenance which is well suited for theatrical effect. His voice is remarkably powerful, his figure rather vigorous than elegant, and his general appearance prepossessing. The subject of the tragedy is one admirably adapted for scenic representation, and has already been essayed in the French and German theatres. . . . The latter part of the play is less vigorous than the former; but there are some scenes of stirring interest, in which Mr. Forrest made a powerful impression on the audience. The poetry of the drama is rather powerful than polished; and although it contains some passages of considerable beauty, it is more generally characterized by a rough, passionate strain, in which gracefulness is sacrificed to force. One speech in which Spartacus describes the beauty of his Thracian valleys

before the invasion of the Romans, and contrasts it with the devastation which had followed their footsteps, struck us as being particularly happy. At the conclusion of the play Mr. Forrest was called for, and began to address the audience, — a practice not usual nor safe, at least on this side of the Atlantic. He thanked them for the reception they had bestowed on him, and expressed his satisfaction in finding in that reception a proof of their good-will. towards America. Now, although their praises were warm and hearty, they were given to him personally and simply because they thought he deserved them, and would have been just as freely bestowed if he had come from Kamtschatka as from New York. There are no national prejudices between an audience and an actor, nor anywhere else in this country, which could make it for a moment questionable that a deserving artist would be well received from whatever quarter of the globe he arrived. When, however, Mr. Forrest, encouraged by the applause, began to thank them for the favors they had shown to the tragedy, he provoked some dissent, the audience not seeming to think as highly of the poet as of the player. So Mr. Forrest made his bow and retired.

"We shall be glad to see him in some other character, and if he acquits himself hereafter as well as he did on this occasion, he will have no reason to be dissatisfied with his voyage, and the theatre will have engaged an able performer, who to very considerable skill in his profession adds the attraction of a somewhat novel and a much more spirited style of playing than any other tragic actor now on our stage."

Henry Wikoff, who was present at Forrest's English début, gives the following account of the scene:—

"On the 17th of October [1836] he made his first bow to the British public. Old Drury was crowded from pit

to ceiling with an eager and excited audience. All the friends of the popular actors of the day congregated in force. The American minister [Andrew Stevenson, of Virginia], and all the fellow-countrymen of Forrest, were likewise present. There was silence until Spartacus, the Gladiator, came forward, when a hearty shout of welcome broke forth from all parts of the house. His magnificent person astonished those who had never seen him; his rich and powerful voice thrilled all who had not heard it; his earnest, impassioned acting quite electrified the At the end he was overwhelmed with applause, and it was plain he had secured a hold on British sympathies, which he never lost. There was a clique present who were disappointed by his success, and when he appeared, at the general demand, to make his acknowledgments, they raised the cry of 'Shakspere, Shakspere!' Their object was evident. The partisans of the popular actors of the time knew it would be easier to arouse opposition to a foreigner should he attempt a rôle the public were accustomed to see played according to the idiosyncrasies of the tragedians who had successfully assumed them, and which only proved my judgment was correct in suggesting an original part for Forrest's début?

Besides the direct glories of the theatre, social courtesies were tendered Forrest. The then unusual honor of a dinner at the Garrick Club was offered and accepted. Here he sat down with Charles Kemble and Macready. Sergeant Talfourd was in the chair, and a host of England's greatest men filled the spacious room. It was during this engagement that he first met the lady whom he afterwards married, — Miss Catherine Sinclair. Thus his first engagement in England resulted, to all appear-

ance, happily, leading to new alliances, dramatic and domestic, to financial prosperity and general esteem.

His return to America was the signal for ovations of every kind, social and professional. He now enjoyed great public favor, and horses, steamers, and carriages were called by the name of America's greatest actor. He resumed his American engagements on the 15th of November, 1837, at the old Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, where he played for one month to overflowing houses. On the 11th of December a great banquet was tendered him by Nicholas Biddle, Hon. J. R. Ingersoll, Dr. Samuel Jackson, Colonel John B. Wetherill, Hon. John Swift, Colonel James Page, Morton McMichael, Robert T. Conrad, Robert Morris, and other distinguished gentlemen of his native city. The speech of the evening was by Chief Justice Gibson, who gave as a toast, "The Stage and its Master." Forrest's reply was in excellent taste, and his allusions to his own early days in his native place, his struggles, his encouragements, and, lastly, the present happy result, were received with great enthusiasm.

He now entered upon his regular engagements through the different cities of the Union, meeting everywhere with the same success, amassing a fortune, and enjoying the intimacy of some of the best spirits of the land. He had reached the summit of his fame. The idol of a nation, high in honor, happy in wealth, married to a young and lovely woman who could sympathize with all his lofty aspirations, — who could foretell disaster from such a happy and fortuitous condition of affairs?

# CHAPTER VI.

#### THE ASTOR PLACE RIOT.

THE fatal riot which occurred in Astor Place was the culmination of a quarrel between Forrest and Macready, which had been growing for years. events of Forrest's life were so involved in the career of Macready that a sketch of the latter will not be out of place here. William Charles Macready was not destined by his parents for a player's life, although he was the son of a celebrated country actor and manager, who had conducted one of the great English circuits for several years with varying success, playing important characters himself. William was sent to a preparatory school with the intention of giving him the advantages of a university training. Disaster came to the affairs of the father, however, and the education of the son was interrupted just at the moment when he was about to mount to a high place in the school. Disappointed at this condition of things, but with much honesty of purpose, he turned to the profession of his father, taking his place in the active management of the circuit, and at last making his appearance as an actor. He had many opportunities for study, although as much work on his hands as he could well perform. He succeeded in

placing the family affairs on a more prosperous footing, paid the pressing debts of his father, and, after several years of provincial work, found a place at last in London, that metropolis towards which the provincial English actor looks with hungry longing.

Macready was a scholar, and he was a worker; but he had no love for his calling. It had robbed him of the prize which seemed so close to his hand, - a good social position and lettered ease. Diligently he strove to rise from the lower ranks of his new profession, but the superior qualities of his rivals stood ever in his way. He seemed to possess none of the requisites for an actor, save industry; he was gaunt and angular, had an unmusical voice and an awkward manner, possessing none of that magnetic quality which wins the auditor oftentimes before the interest of the character has unfolded itself in the plot; but he was an enormous worker, with a soul boiling against his surroundings. With an ambition which jealousy tinctured and made contemptible, he spared no pains, he shunned no task which could help him on towards the height on which his eyes were fixed. The heavy parts in the plays fell to him, and his manner suited them admirably. He contended with such theatrical giants as the last of the Kembles, Charles Young, Junius Brutus Booth, and Edmund Kean. His style was unlike theirs; his work was cold, full of scholarship and of study, but not impulsive or spontaneous. He was compelled to give place for many years to men whose excellence and superiority he never would confess; but they were the idols of the public, and by their side

Macready never held any other than a subordinate rank. It is said that when the play of the "Apostate" was brought to the theatre by the author, the elder Booth, who was enamored of Miss O'Neill, then the darling of the London public, and the greatest actress of her day, declined the part of Pescara, the villain, which he afterwards made so famous, and demanded that of Hemeya, the lover of Florinda, that he might play the love scenes with the O'Neill. This incident placed the part in Macready's hands; and it was the first great hit he had made in London. The character was soon resumed by Booth, for whom it was intended, and never afterwards acted by Macready. At length, one by one, the great men who had been in the way of his advancement were removed, and he stood in the front rank of his profession. All the harshness of his nature now appeared; he became haughty and offensive to all about him, subservient only to the aristocracy, but still working at his art with the spirit of a slave at the galleys. He was of an economical nature, and soon accumulated means. He quarrelled with and left his old manager, and, aided by the wealthy friends whom he had never failed to propitiate, became himself a manager, inaugurating a series of revivals of old plays magnificent beyond the experience of that day. His research and scholarship attracted to the theatre learned men, and he gave a healthy impetus to dramatic taste which will ever be his crown. He put himself prominently forward in these revivals, but they were none the less creditable and admirable. His career as a manager was marked by tyranny and cruelty. He had no friends in those

who served him; he allowed no rivals to stand between him and the public. When Ryder once remonstrated with him upon some occasion of punished insubordination, and told him he was a tyrant, Macready replied: "No, sir; I am not a tyrant. I am a despot." dearly loved a lord; he dearly hated his profession, but it gave him all he had; without it he would be nothing. Like Congreve, before him, he had a snob's contempt for his art, and was more proud of his social position than of his reputation as an actor, well meriting from the Voltaires of his day the rebuke of the old French philosopher who, on the well-known occasion of his visit to the author of "The Double Dealer" and "Love for Love," so pointedly declared that he had called, not upon Congreve the gentleman, but upon Congreve the writer, adding, "If you had been no more than a gentleman, sir, I would not have been here."

Macready, however, attracted to the theatre some of the ablest contemporary writers; and the best stage editions of the plays of his time are those which bear the marks of his directing talent. He was the original of more than one hundred characters, and became at last recognized as the great representative English actor. He was the friend of Bulwer, of Dickens, of Forster, and of Talfourd, and was so tenacious of what he considered his dignity that he never permitted his children to see him in any of his characters for fear they might conceive contempt for his authority. He was a despot at home as well as in the theatre. He kept a diary which speaks wonders for his diligence and his industry,

but shows the violent, impetuous nature that was constantly leading him into difficulties, as constantly, however, to be regretted on bended knees. Some parts of this diary resemble the Confessions of Rousseau. He seemed to bear a scourging monitor within his breast, and that monitor was ever applying the scourge.

His performances were models of mechanism, they lacked the divine spark which is called genius, but were yet penetrated by an intelligence which gave them unusually attractive power. He was greatest in such parts as Richelieu, Werner, and Cassius, where a certain angularity of mind and body are not out of place, and where a dry subtlety and a studied declamation are accepted in lieu of magnetic powers. No two men could be more unlike than were Macready and Forrest, - the one scholarly, mechanical, cold, laboring without love in the hard traces of his profession; the other open, frank, and an ardent lover of whatever he was called upon in his art to do. A good illustration of the selfconsciousness of Macready is given in one of the pages of his diary. He is going to the first performance of Bulwer's "Money," after many rehearsals, and much care on his part; and he ingenuously notes that "he is certain the play will fail because there are two other good parts in the piece." These are the conflicting elements which form the character of one of the most noted actors of his age, or any age; but when all is said, common justice demands the acknowledgment that the modern theatre owes more to the industry of William Macready than to the example of any other actor who preceded or followed him. The stage needed just such

a laborer to show to the followers of Edmund Kean that genius alone is not able to advance the highest purpose of any art. By his constant and untiring will he performed a herculean task, and he restored to the stage a more careful and more cultivated study of its aims and ends. With all the elaboration of modern French comedy he united some of the deepest subtleties of the old masters of the dramatic art; and the weird tragedy of "Macbeth" under his skilful mechanism was endowed with such an amount of faithful detail that the play became almost a new work, and gave his own performance a place beyond the power of any rival. No career is so instructive to the young actor as that of Macready, in spite of the offensive nature of the man.

He occupied a place in the English theatre which at his retirement remained vacant for twenty years, until Henry Irving advanced to fill it with some of the same powerful qualities of his predecessor, much of his industry, but none of his coldness for his fellow-men. Macready's life was that of a scholar, a gentleman, and a good citizen. He fulfilled all the requirements of his social life, and retired at last from an art which he hated, rich in fortune, fame, and friends. True to his principles to the last hour of his professional life, he is said to have told his servant, when he was going to take his leave forever of the public, to "hold the curtain close when he came off, that he might not be annoyed by the adieus of those actors." He never concealed his contempt for Charles Kean, who rivalled him in his last years, and of whom he always spoke as "the son of his

father." Enough has been shown of Macready's life to make it clear that when Forrest went to England, he was likely to find that actor's friendship warm or cold, as he succeeded or failed. Macready had appeared in America in 1826, playing in New York, Philadelphia, and other large cities, but with moderate success. His style was not pleasing to the masses, more used to the robust method of Cooper or the fiery genius of Booth, although he attracted the notice of scholars and the polite circles generally. He had brought letters which gave him the *entrée* to many hospitable houses, but his friends could not stir up popular feeling in his favor. He returned in 1827, feeling that he had not been appreciated here.

He was courteous to Forrest on his first visit, and a seeming friendship sprang up between the two men. Macready was an old friend of the lady who became the wife of Forrest, and they often met under Sinclair's roof. He was one of the honored guests at the ceremony of their marriage, and seemed happy in the success which the young actor was gaining in a foreign land. Years passed on, and Macready came again to America, reappearing in 1843. Forrest was then at the height of his fame, and the performances of Macready compared unfavorably in the mind of the public with those of their own actor. The papers entered into a wordy discussion upon the merits of the rival stars, and considerable feeling was aroused on both sides, national jealousy often stepping in to make matters worse. Macready returned to his own country with hatred in his heart for the man who had been the

cause, as he thought, of his second American failure. When Forrest went to London in 1845, he was met on the night of his opening with a storm of hisses, and he was compelled after a few nights to give up his engagement and retire. Forrest at once charged the violence of his reception upon Macready, whether justly or unjustly can never be known, and declared that by his means John Forster and a clique of London critics had joined together to write and hiss him down. The journals which on his former visit had been loud in his praises could now find no words strong enough to paint his barbarous faults.

Social intercourse was broken off by Forrest, who held Macready directly responsible for his reception. He travelled through the provinces, and at Edinburgh one night, while sitting in a box to see Macready's *Hamlet*, he was foolish enough to hiss him in what he called a pas de mouchoir in the play scene. This act, opposed to good taste, and the duty which the actor owes to his public and to himself, was at once reported in the newspapers, and led to letters of crimination and recrimination, which made the quarrel an open scandal, not only in England, but in America, where the articles were copied and read by the friends and foes of both men.

Mr. Macready's first impressions of this unfortunate affair, recorded in his diary, are interesting here, and are quoted in full:—

"Edinburgh, March 2, 1846. — Acted *Hamlet*, really with particular care, energy, and discrimination. The audience gave less applause to the first soliloquy than I am

in the habit of receiving; but I was bent on acting the part, and I felt, if I can feel at all, that I had strongly excited them, and that their sympathies were cordially, indeed enthusiastically, with me. On reviewing the performance, I can conscientiously pronounce it one of the very best I have given of Hamlet. At the waving of the handkerchief before the play, and 'I must be idle,' a man on the right side of the stage - upper boxes or gallery, but said to be upper boxes — hissed! The audience took it up, and I waved the more, and bowed derisively and contemptuously to the individual. The audience carried it, though he was very stanch to his purpose. discomposed me, and, alas! might have ruined many; but I bore it down. I thought of speaking to the audience, if called on, and spoke to Murray about it, but he, very discreetly, dissuaded me. Was called for and very warmly greeted. Ryder came and spoke to me, and told me that the hisser was observed, and said to be a Mr. W-, who was in company with Mr. Forrest. man writes in the Journal, a paper depreciating me and eulogizing Mr. F., sent to me from this place."

Forrest came back to his own country with a raging heart against England and Englishmen, and particularly against William C. Macready. The case became an international one, — the quarrel of John Bull and his young offspring, Brother Jonathan. Forrest's reception became a matter of patriotism; the Democracy rallied as one man to vindicate his honor and that of the nation insulted in his person. It was well known that, while he had been denied a fair hearing in London, on account, perhaps, of Macready's secret opposition, he had gained the applause of all the provinces through

which he played immediately after his London failure; but this fact did not weigh in the minds of his ardent friends. A storm was brewing which only waited the return of Macready to burst and scatter death and destruction in its course.

It was during this interval — in June, 1847 — that Edwin Forrest's mother died, an event which gave his heart a shock more violent than any it had before known. Her death lent a sombre coloring to the joy with which fame and success in his art were now filling his soul, and over her grave he shed bitter tears.

In September, 1848, Macready returned to America. A plan was formed, but defeated by Forrest to whom it was submitted, that Macready should be hissed from the stage. Macready, in one of his speeches before the curtain, unwisely alluded to this rumored attempt, in order, it seemed, to gain sympathy for himself. He was openly hissed in Forrest's native city, and there, before the curtain, alluded to the scene in Edinburgh, where Forrest had hissed him. Forrest replied to this in a violent and ungentlemanly letter the next day in the public prints. Macready responded, and threatened a lawsuit. Forrest had stigmatized him as an "aged driveller," Macready then being a little more than fifty years of age. In a subsequent "card" Forrest declared that he solemnly believed Macready had instigated his friends in England to write him down, and to drive him from the field.

The honors in this wordy squabble were all with Macready, who preserved his dignity while defending his cause. Forrest's outbreaks were in direct violation of

good taste. The papers were full of the quarrel, and different sides were taken by Americans as well as foreigners. The following "card," from the Philadelphia *Pennsylvanian* of November 22, 1848, is eminently characteristic of Forrest, and will give a fair idea of the manner in which the wordy war was waged on his part:—

"Mr. Macready, in his speech last night to the audience assembled at the Arch Street Theatre, made allusion, I understand, to an 'American actor' who had the temerity on one occasion 'openly to hiss him.' This is true, and, by the way, the only truth which I have been enabled to gather from the whole scope of his address. But why say 'an American actor'? Why not openly charge me with the act? for I did it, and publicly avowed it in *The Times* newspaper, of London, and at the same time asserted my right to do so.

"On the occasion alluded to, Mr. Macready introduced a fancy dance into his performance of *Hamlet*, which I designated as a pas de mouchoir, and which I hissed, for I thought it a desecration of the scene; and the audience thought so, too; for, a few nights afterwards, when Mr. Macready repeated the part of *Hamlet* with the same 'tomfoolery,' the intelligent audience greeted it with an universal hiss.

"Mr. Macready is stated to have said last night that he 'had never entertained towards me a feeling of unkindness.' I unhesitatingly pronounce this to be a wilful and unblushing falsehood. I most solemnly aver, and do believe, that Mr. Macready, instigated by his narrow, envious mind and selfish fears, did secretly — not openly — suborn several writers for the English press to write me down. Among them was one Forster, a 'toady' of the

eminent tragedian, — one who is ever ready to do his dirty work; and this Forster, at the bidding of his patron, attacked me in print, even before I had appeared upon the London boards, and continued to abuse me at every opportunity afterwards.

"I assert also, and solemnly believe, that Mr. Macready connived, when his friends went to the theatre in London, to hiss me, and did hiss me, with the purpose of driving me from the stage; and all this happened many months before the affair at Edinburgh, to which Mr. Macready refers, and in relation to which he jesuitically remarks, that 'until that act he never entertained towards me a feeling of unkindness.' Pah! Mr. Macready has no feeling of kindness for any actor who is likely by his talent to stand in his way. His whole course as manager and as actor proves this. There is nothing in him but self - self - self; and his own countrymen, the English actors, know this well. Mr. Macready has a very lively imagination, and often draws upon it for his facts. He said, in a speech at New York, that there also there was an 'organized opposition' to him, which is likewise false. There was no opposition manifested towards him there, for I was in the city at the time, and careful to watch every movement with regard to such a matter. Many of my friends called upon me when Mr. Macready was announced to perform, and proposed to drive him from the stage, for his conduct to me in London. My advice was, do nothing; let the superannuated driveller alone; to oppose him would be but to make him of some importance. My friends agreed with me that it was at least the most dignified course to pursue; and it was immediately adopted. With regard to an 'organized opposition' to him in Boston, that is, I believe, equally false. But perhaps, in charity to the poor old

man, I should impute these 'chimeras dire' rather to the disturbed state of his guilty conscience than to any desire on his part wilfully to misrepresent."

On the 7th of May, 1848, Macready began an engagement at the Astor Place Opera House, under the management of J. H. Hackett. The theatre was packed by his enemies, and he was hooted from the stage. He prepared to return to his own country, but was persuaded by his friends to remain, in order that he might see how far the public indorsed the opposition against him. An invitation to this effect, signed by many of the best citizens of New York, was taken as a defiance by the admirers of Forrest, who prepared to meet the issue. Forrest was playing at the Broadway Theatre, and on the 16th of May Macready, at the Astor Place house, was announced to reappear as Macbeth. The authorities had been called to the aid of the signers of the call, and when the doors were opened the theatre was instantly filled by a crowd of persons favorable to the actor, while the great mass of his enemies were excluded. These filled the street, however, while the few who did gain admission showed their opposition upon the appearance of Macready. At the first attempt the assailants were confronted by a body of Macready's friends within the theatre too powerful to be resisted; but the majority without added a threatening reinforcement when the decisive moment for violence should arrive.

The play was stopped, Macready, hustled from the back door, in the cloak of a friend, barely escaped with his life, and the mimic tragedy within doors gave way

to the approaching real tragedy without. The theatre was attacked on all sides by the mob, and its destruction seemed inevitable. Troops were called out, the order was given to disperse, the angry crowd only hooted a reply of derision, the riot act was read amid the yells and oaths of the blood-seeking rabble, stones and missiles were hurled at the Seventh Regiment, the police gave way before the overpowering numbers of the mob, and at last, the soldiers, sore pressed, wounded, and nearly demoralized by the assaults which they were not allowed to repulse, were called upon to fire. They responded with blank cartridges, which only increased the fury of the crowd. A pause, and then the order was given to load with balls. A volley was fired; the cries were hushed, the smoke cleared away, the ground was red with the blood of some thirty unfortunate men, the rioters vanished into the darkness before that hail of wrath, and the stain of blood was upon that quarrel which began far away in Old England and ended so tragically here.

Macready returned home full of manly regret for the horror which had clouded his American visit, and Forrest at once lost the support of what is called the "upper classes" of his own people. This quarrel with Macready has been given at some length, because it exercised an important influence upon the career of Forrest. The right which he claimed to hiss a brother actor cannot be defended. He was too great a man to descend to such pitiful revenge. He was, however, now more than ever an object of interest to his more humble admirers; and certain ardent patriots saw in him, or fancied they did, a champion of American resistance to English assumption. He lived to learn that the fame of a great actor, so hard to attain, is still harder to keep. Like the most delicate lace, one flaw will cause the destruction of the whole fabric.

## CHAPTER VII.

#### DOMESTIC LIFE.

THE lady who became the wife of Edwin Forrest was Miss Catherine Sinclair. Her father was a man of some celebrity in musical circles, and his home was the resort of men and women of taste and culture, and one of the art centres of London. The accomplishments of Miss Sinclair were the admiration of her home circle, while her beauty attracted to her side a host of adorers. Even in a society where physical and mental beauty are not uncommon qualities in the female sex, the claims of Miss Sinclair were allowed preeminence. She was the lifelong friend of Macready, and at her home he often met Forrest, even after the first seeds of the quarrel were sown. The affection which sprang up in the breast of Forrest on his presentation to Miss Sinclair was reciprocated by the fair object of his love, and the parental consent was given to their union. Henry Wikoff, a friend of Forrest's and the Sinclairs, who was present at their marriage, thus describes it in his "Reminiscences of an Idler:"-

"In the latter part of June [1837] the marriage of Forrest took place in the church of the parish he was living in, St. Paul's, Covent Garden, which was built in 1633,

and is said to contain the remains of more celebrities than any church in London, save Westminster Abbey. It was there the handsome actor, William O'Brien, married his runaway bride, Lady Susan Strongways, eldest daughter of the Earl of Ilchester. Only a limited number of the tragedian's friends were invited, as he desired to avoid anything like a sensational display. Among these were the American minister and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. John Bates, Mr. and Mrs. Dunlop, and Miss Gamble, with some others. The Rev. John Croly, the biographer of George IV., officiated. I had the honor of figuring as Forrest's only groomsman, or, as they call it here, his 'best man.' I do not believe there ever was seen a handsomer couple who took each other for better or worse, than the twain who were nuptially bound together that day. Forrest was just thirty-one, and a model of manly beauty; his bride barely twenty, and neither poet nor painter ever dreamed of anything more lovely than she appeared on her bridal day. Everybody gazed on them with admiration, and declared never was seen a more beautiful pair. From the church we adjourned to the house of the bride's father, in Alfred Place, where the usual wedding breakfast was served with great luxury. The United States minister, in a felicitous speech, toasted the happy couple, and Forrest responded in the best taste. Dr. Croly, even better known in the literary world than the church, delivered a very effective speech. . . . They looked supremely happy as they set off on their hymeneal trip, and everybody heartily wished them God-speed."

It was remembered later that Forrest had met Miss Sinclair on Friday, had proposed on Friday, and was married on Friday. This may have been one of those stories which are told after a catastrophe to fit the cir-

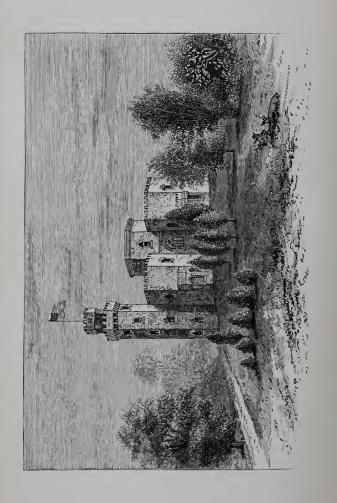
cumstances, and perhaps is not reliable. Mr. and Mrs. Forrest soon after embarked for America, leaving behind them a whole heart full of regrets, and encountering on their arrival here as warm a welcome on the part of the bridegroom's old admirers, who were eager to become the lady's slaves as well. Presented to his friends, she at once made a deep and lasting impression. Her native delicacy of mind and refinement of manners enchanted those who hoped for some such influence to be exerted in softening the rough vigor and democratic downrightness of the man. Their society was courted by all those who knew the actor; and for the first time the admirers of Forrest's genius might hope to see him at the fireside of a peaceful home, where beauty and grace presided. She became his companion in his travels, making the time fly pleasantly when the cares of the theatre were over. The hitherto lonely moments passed by him in strange hotels were now intervals of happiness, brightened by her loving companionship. She was his equal mentally, and the play of her intellect brought out all the power of his own well-stored mind.

The friendship which Mr. Leggett had ever entertained for Forrest was now extended to his wife, and until his death that learned man and constant friend retained his place in their hearts. During their many journeyings to the far West a pleasant correspondence was kept up between them and the Leggetts, and in these letters the young wife gives many evidences of the commanding quality of her intellect and her advanced opinions on the subject of the married state. The family of Forrest welcomed his bride with open hearts,

and to Eleanora, the favorite sister of Edwin, the young English girl became a loving and constant friend. When absent, hers were the letters which brought to the sisters' fireside the news of their wandering fortunes, and her name became a household word in her husband's family.

At times the actor's duties called him away from the side of his wife, and then her letters betrayed the anxious love she bore for the absent one; his replies being equally affectionate. To their home came troops of friends, attracted equally by the fame of the husband and the charms of the wife. Willis was there, the fashionable poet of the day; and Bryant, the editor of the Post, the poet whose lines form a part of our literature, with his grave, thoughtful face, recalling to the young wife the early glories of her gallant husband, - a notable figure in that social group, who was to survive all the vicissitudes of the pair, and go down at last, in a good old age, to his rest. The Godwins, husband and wife, close friends of both, afterwards so sadly interested in the separation, shared an honored place in that family group. While just in its dawn, there was the manly affection and enduring trust of James Oakes, and a renewal of an old boy-love, begun in their early Thespian days in Philadelphia, with James Rees, who still lives, and who as "Colley Cibber" has since given us an estimate of his dead friend, true and invaluable. Now in the ripe fulness of his fortune, the thoughtful husband looked forward to his future, and Fonthill was chosen as a home. The plans were formed by Mrs. Forrest and approved by him. A castle of mixed





architecture was to spring up on the banks of the Hudson, which was to be a witness to posterity of the love its founder bore his art; for it was dedicated to American actors, whose home at its builder's death it was intended to be. As Nature had denied Edwin Forrest offspring, he desired to adopt the unfortunate members of his profession. In loving emulation the youthful pair vied with each other in plans for the advancement of their project, and as the pile assumed proportions they gazed with pardonable pride upon their work. A rude structure was erected on the grounds, and here they often repaired to pass happy hours in directing and watching the progress of the building. Here, on a certain Fourth of July, Edwin Forrest gathered a number of his friends and neighbors, and, surrounded by them on a green knoll, he read the Declaration of Independence as he only could read that document.

The married life of Forrest promised to be as peaceful and happy as his professional life was glorious. Those who before did not believe him to be a domestic character were now nearly convinced of their errors. If he were framed at all for the quiet happiness which belongs to the fireside, surely here were the influences which should attract him; a young and lovely wife, a prosperous fortune, and a place in the estimation of the world beyond the common inheritance even of extraordinary men.

His friends declared, indeed, that they saw an unusual softness and gentleness in his hitherto brusque and harsh demeanor, and they attributed it to the influence of her who reigned in the home circle. A playful

humor, which had only been allowed limited license before, now seemed to be natural to him, and was a welcome relief after the heavy duties of the artist were performed. The rehearsals which had hitherto been attended often by outbreaks of violence were now less turbulent, and even carelessness or indifference escaped his merited rebuke. To this period belongs the anecdote of the poor actor who was so slow in catching the expression of certain lines which Forrest was trying to teach him. When he had failed after many efforts to imbue the pale speaker with some of his own spirit, he excitedly repeated the speech himself, and gave it with all the Forrestian emphasis. Halting at the close, "There," he said, "can you not speak it like that?" The actor replied quietly, "If I could, Mr. Forrest, I would not be playing here for five dollars a week." "Is that all your salary?" inquired Forrest. "All, sir." "Well, then, speak it your own way, sir." The poor actor's salary was raised, however, and when he went to the box-office on next pay-day he had cause to thank the forbearance of the star. This is only one of the many acts of thoughtful kindness which are told of him during the early and happy days of his married life.

Honors not professional were now heaped upon Forrest. He was offered the nomination to Congress from one of the New York City districts, which he declined. His steady democracy and honest manliness would have made a mark in those halls, where eloquence like his is rarely found. He delivered the oration on a Fourth of July before a political gathering in New York, in which, of course, many of his professional admirers were numbered. It seemed as if the glory of his dramatic career was to be reflected in a social elevation which should raise the public regard for his calling, and add new laurels to his already laden brow.

The American Dramatic Fund was organized about this time, and he was chosen its first president. It had given promise of being an active promoter of the best interests of the American actor, and he lent to the scheme his hearty support. When he withdrew his influence later, it fell into a torpid condition, because no longer American in its aims; and now it lingers on, with few members, the seal of death stamped upon it.

Wherever his eye fell upon anything suggesting the advancement of his art, he instantly gave it his encouragement. Learning by the winning example of his wife the habit of conciliation, he sought to enlarge the circle of his acquaintance by a judicious selection. His choice fell upon many who admired him for his genius, and were attracted by his frank, generous manner; and while such men as John B. Rice, William Warren, and others of their exalted character, stood in the ranks of Forrest's friends, he felt assured that their relations were so independent of all self-interest as to be highly complimentary to him.

His professional engagements were numerous, his profits swelling the bulk of his growing fortune at a rate exceeding all precedent. His property in Kentucky he now improved, and gave to one of its avenues the name of his beloved Oakes. His theatrical position at the head of his profession was unchallenged.

Even such giants as Booth and Wallack could not deny his precedence, when a whole nation endorsed his claim and were his servants.

The preparations at Fonthill went on meanwhile, and that massive pile moved towards its completion. Here it was his wont to refresh his body and recreate his mind, surrounded by the loving friends whom his own genius and the graces of his wife attracted. The sister of Mrs. Forrest and her father and mother shared his hospitable home, and all the relaxations which such family reunions and domestic associations bring seemed created to brighten the path of the hard-working actor.

New parts were added to his *repertoire*, and *Richelieu* and *Claude* (in the "Lady of Lyons") gave new evidences of his power. His plans for the encouragement of an American drama, only in part a failure, gave him new material in the "Broker of Bogota" and in "Metamora," both produced with decided success.

How far Edwin Forrest was fitted to enjoy the calm delights of a home it is impossible to say. His friends could not realize that one so imperious, so born to rule and be obeyed, could consent to become in the slightest sense subordinate to the will of another. They had not known how the strong knee had bent before the mother whom he adored; how, at the parental fireside, the son was moved by the will of the good old woman who could lead him by love alone.

The first cloud which seemed to lower over the domestic heaven appeared in England during his second visit, when it was said he became angry because his wife was unwilling to drive Macready from her side during her receptions. Forrest himself refused to speak to him, and he felt it galling to be compelled to see any one dear to him courteous to such an enemy. Macready had known the Sinclairs intimately for years, and on this occasion had mingled with her other friends to welcome Mrs. Forrest on her return to England.

To those who saw only the outward signs, this period may be regarded as that in which Edwin Forrest stood at the very pinnacle of worldly renown. Rich, famous, happy, he possessed a threefold gift of the gods, and he might, like Polycrates, almost tremble at so much favor; indeed, the hour was at hand when the hollowness of this show was to be revealed, and we sorrowfully turn now to write the record of a career which touched its zenith too early, and was destined too quickly to decline. In an evil hour for himself, in an evil hour for his art and the struggling drama in America, Edwin Forrest threw open the doors of his home to the scrutiny of the world, and appealed to the courts to remove the skeleton which was hidden in his closet. With the proceedings of that trial, which resulted in divorce, alimony, and separation, this memoir has nothing to do. All those who are curious for such information are referred to two large volumes of a thousand pages each, which contain the records of a legal battle unprecedented for bitterness and for the wide interest it created on account of the position of the contestants, as well as the eminent character of the counsel. While the proud, imperious temper of Forrest may not have fitted him for the married state, it seems certain that he was compelled to endure (as in his wife's reception of Macready in London) such assaults upon his pride as seemed severe trials to one of his nature, and both man and wife must have lived to agree with Pericles, that "She is best who is least spoken of among men, whether for good or evil."

Those who had taken the part of Macready in the quarrel and émeute in Astor Place now managed to divide public opinion in the interest of the wife, and a strong opposition was established among those who had espoused the Macready cause on that occasion. The friends of good order, the friends of social decorum, the higher classes generally, were on the side of the wife and against the husband; and when the result was reached and a verdict given in the lady's favor, none rejoiced more than those who had been defeated in their efforts to give Macready the hearing in America which was denied to Forrest in England. With the consequences of those events the following chapter will deal; we only state here that the alimony was fixed at three thousand dollars a year, and the divorce granted to the lady alone, the husband being debarred from marrying again.

## CHAPTER VIII.

AFTER THE TRIAL. - MRS. FORREST'S PROFESSIONAL LIFE.

EDWIN FORREST, leaving the court-room a defeated man, was instantly raised to a popularity with the masses beyond anything even he had before experienced. The public reversed the judgment of the court, and while "good society" applauded the clearance of the lady, the hard-handed democracy hailed their old favorite as "martyr," crowning him with a wreath of sorrow, only that they might worship him the more.

He began an engagement soon after at the Broadway Theatre, opening as *Damon*. The house was crowded to suffocation. Upon his entrance he was greeted with deafening cheers, which were repeated again and again while the actor bowed his thanks. A large flag was unfurled in the pit by his admirer, Captain Rynders, with the words, "This is the people's verdict;" and at the close of the play, when called before the curtain, he was obliged to respond to the demands for a "speech." He spoke as follows, quoting from the ample and complete life of Forrest by the Rev. William R. Alger:—

"LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — After the unparalleled verdict which you have rendered me here to-night, you

will not doubt that I consider this the proudest moment of my life. And yet it is a moment not unmingled with sadness. Instinctively I ask myself the question, Why is this vast assemblage here to-night, composed as it is of the intelligent, the high-minded, the right-minded, and last, though not least, the beautiful of the Empire City? Is it because a favorite actor appears in a favorite character? No, the actor and the performances are as familiar to you as household words. Why, then, this unusual ferment? It is because you have come to express your irrepressible sympathy for one whom you know to be a deeply-injured man. Nay, more, you are here with a higher and a holier purpose, -to vindicate the principle of even-handed justice. I do not propose to examine the proceedings of the late unhappy trial; those proceedings are now before you, and before the world, and you can judge as rightly of them as I can. I have no desire to instruct you in the verdict you shall render. The issue of that trial will yet be before the court, and I shall patiently await the judgment of that court, be it what it may. In the meanwhile, I submit my cause to you, - my cause, did I say? - no, not my cause alone, but yours, the cause of every man in the community, the cause of every human being, the cause of every honest wife, the cause of every virtuous woman, the cause of every one who cherishes a home and the pure spirit which should abide there. Ladies and gentlemen, I submit my cause to a tribunal uncorrupt and incorruptible; I submit it to the sober second thought of the people. A little while since, and I thought my pathway of life was filled with thorns; you have this night filled it with roses (looking at the bouquets at his feet). Their perfume is gratifying to the senses, and I am grateful for your beautiful and fragrant offering."

The applause which greeted this speech was prolonged until the actor had bowed himself beyond the

line of the curtain. The temperance of his words made him many new friends who expected nothing but violence. Had he practised the same restraint before and during the trial, it might have altered the issue. An illustration of that roughness which characterized him is here given. He had been intimate with the celebrated lawyer Charles O'Conor. They were neighbors, and were in the habit of conversing as they met in the railway cars on their way to or from Yonkers and New York. One day Forrest learned that O'Conor had taken the brief of Mrs. Forrest, and, without waiting to question him, on the next occasion of their meeting on the train he began an abusive attack, to which the lawyer listened in contemptuous silence, until as the train neared the station, and they were about to step down, O'Conor turned and said, "I had not decided to accept the brief in this case, but your brutal conduct has determined me, and I charge you to look well to your case, for I will show you no mercy;" a threat which the able counsel religiously kept.

For sixty-nine nights the people thronged the Broadway Theatre. The engagement was unparalleled in the history of the American drama for length and profit. All the allusions which could be applied to the trial were given with malicious point by the actor, and hailed with applause by the audience. At the end of the first act of "Richelieu," when the old cardinal said, —

<sup>&</sup>quot;France, I love thee; all earth shall never tear thee '
From my heart. My mistress — France, my wedded wife,
Sweet France, who shall proclaim divorce for thee and me?"

the audience sprang to their feet, and in a shower of "bravos" the act-drop descended. In his final speech

at the close of this engagement he alluded to its flattering character, and ended by saying that "such a demonstration vindicates me more than a thousand verdicts, for it springs from those who make and unmake judges."

"But," using again the words of Alger, "despite the flattering applause of the multitude, added to the support of his own conscience, and notwithstanding his abounding health and strength and enhancing riches, from the date of his separation and desire for divorce, the dominant tone of the life of Forrest was changed. His demeanor had a more forbidding aspect, his disposition a sterner tinge, his faith in human nature less genial expansion, his joy in existence less spontaneous exuberance. The circle of his friends was greatly contracted, a certain irritable soreness was fixed in his sensibility, he shrank more strongly than ever from miscellaneous society, and seemed to be more asserting or protecting himself cloaked in an appearance of reserve and gloom. The world of life never again wore to him the smiling aspect it had so often worn before."

On his again assuming the labors of his profession, that which above is so clearly told became apparent to his friends. The applause which filled his ears, the wealth which flowed in upon him, could not improve that temper which had never been amiable, and all the hard stories of his life belong to this period. He measured the friendship of his old companions by their eagerness or coldness in meeting his wishes in the collection of evidence for his case in the trial, and as he was not delicate in the tone of his requests, so was he

harsh in his treatment of those who did not fulfil them. To John Rice, of Chicago, who had been closely associated with him for years, he wrote for such a service as no gentleman would care to perform, even for his dearest friend, and especially where a lady was concerned. He never spoke to Rice after his refusal, and thus lost the counsel and friendship of a man whose probity, honor, and sterling manhood were so well known in Chicago, which made him its chief officer on two occasions, and at last placed him in Congress as its representative. With another actor, John Gilbert, he refused to play when engaging for Boston after the trial, and to the day of his death he never mentioned his name without abuse.

To those who stood by him he was, on the other hand, grateful and affectionate in a marked degree. James Oakes knew no bounds in the love he bore his friend, and gave him, at every turn in the trial, proofs of his loyalty. James Lawson was equally faithful, and both received many proofs of his good-will; while for the Godwins, the Bryants, and others who had either espoused the lady's cause openly or were coldly neutral, he entertained the most freezing scorn.

Despising the spot which had been consecrated to the great purpose of his life, as a remembrance of her who had shared in its inception, he sold Fonthill to the Sisters of Notre Dame for one hundred thousand dollars, and when the second instalment fell due he remitted five thousand dollars of the purchase-money. He now bought a house and grounds on Broad Street, Philadelphia, and, placing his sisters there, he began the foundation of another home, where all the early associations of his youth were revived and all trace of his sorrow and bitter trial banished. Now and then some touching act of charity would seem to contradict the hardness of his nature. A poor actor, late for rehearsal, was reproached by Forrest in a stern manner. The man replied that he was very sorry; he had met with a severe affliction; his boy had died in the night. Placing fifty dollars in his hand, Forrest bade the man go home, saying that he would see that his absence should not work him injury.

He sought out his early manager, Jones, whom he found poor and suffering in his old age, took him to his stately home, and relieved his wants; furnishing him with a place where he would be out of the reach of future sorrow, and watching over him until his death. An incident of his brusqueness belongs here. A lady who was dressed for a male part was in his way as he was about to go upon the stage; he ordered her to stand aside; she did not quickly obey, when he took the supposed man by the shoulder rudely and pushed him away. The lady burst into tears, and Forrest then apologized, saying, "I did not know you were a lady." Her woman's wit did not fail her as she replied, "Sir, you might have mistaken me for a gentleman."

To his other strong passions was now added that of avarice, the desire to accumulate wealth, when those to whose happiness that wealth contributed were passing beyond the need of his help. He had learned the lesson of economy in the hard school of adversity, he had known want, and he was always strictly honorable

in his money dealings. He said, "In early life I learned to depend solely upon myself for sustenance. The desire I had for wealth was first fostered only that I might be able to contribute to the comforts of those whose veins bore blood like mine, and to smooth the pathway to the grave of the gentlest, the truest, the most unselfish friend I ever knew, my mother! to relieve the wants of friends less fortunate than myself, and to succor the distressed wherever found."

He continued his engagements for several years, meeting with amazing success in all the large cities where the fame of the trial and the genius of the man made the people eager to see him. On the 20th of September, 1852, he reappeared at the Broadway Theatre, New York, and repeated the triumph of his former engagement. He returned again in February, 1853, and for the first and last time in his life he took part in a great revival of one of Shakspere's plays. "Macbeth" was produced in grand style, with new scenery and appointments. The tragedy was played on twenty consecutive nights, then by far the longest run of any Shaksperean play in America. The cast was phenomenal, Conway, Duff, Davenport, Pope, Davidge, Barry, and Madame Ponisi playing the leading parts under Mr. Forrest.

In 1855 a benefit was given to the veteran actor and manager, James W. Wallack, Sen., a warm friend of Forrest's. On this occasion he deviated from his fixed rule of life, and gave his aid and talents to the beneficiary, appearing as *Damon* to the *Pythias* of Mr. E. L. Davenport. For some professional reason now unknown, Forrest was not on speaking terms with Davenport, and

when the rehearsal took place avoided giving him direct instruction, by saying, "Pythias stands there," or "Pythias goes here," without looking towards the actor. This breach was never healed, and many years later, when Davenport sent word to Forrest that he would like to play Iago to his Othello, the reply came back, "That he would not let him play Montano in his cast!" These were in his violent moments, and illustrate the perverse and soured elements of his nature.

After five years of constant labor, he resolved upon taking the rest which he had often promised himself, and in the retirement of his Philadelphia home he found recreation; the presence of Forney, Dougherty, and McMichael recompensing him for the applause of the theatre, which he had for a period abandoned. These loving friends sought to draw him into society again, and drown the bitter past in the renewal of better and truer associations; but this he declined, and with his family, his books, and his few friends, he kept the chosen tenor of his way unbroken.

During this retirement the first alarming symptoms of the malady—which afterwards was so severe—appeared in an attack of inflammatory gout or rheumatism, which laid him up for weeks; but his strong constitution and regular habits of living overcame the disease for a time, and the attack was forgotten. The seeds of gout were hereditary, however, and were destined again and again to break out and shatter his giant frame.

In 1855 a series of articles appeared in one of the New York papers written in the most brilliant manner, but in every way offensive to Forrest. He was here





denounced as a "butcher," a "ranter," a "stage ruffian," and assailed by other epithets of like coarse nature. They reflected the sentiments of the clique which had been favorable to Macready at the time of the riot, and showed that the affair was not forgotten. Indeed, from this date we notice that fashionable society began to discover that Forrest was not what he had been in his earlier days. Davenport and Murdoch were said to be his superiors in Hamlet, Wallack, in Rolla, while Gustavus Brooke, a young English actor of extraordinary genius, far eclipsed him in his great part, Othello. Meanwhile, resisting the verdict rendered in the famous trial, and refusing to pay the alimony awarded, he carried his case to the higher court, where he hoped to obtain a reversal of the judgment; and in this way he kept his unfortunate family troubles still in the public mind.

Mrs. Forrest, resuming her maiden name, had, soon after the trial, made her appearance as an actress, selecting for her opening, with questionable taste, the comedy of the "School for Scandal." A fashionable audience greeted her, and she played other parts during her brief engagement at Brougham's Lyceum, but with diminishing success. She was supported by George Vandenhoff, under whom she had studied for the stage, by William H. Chippendale, Henry Lynne, William J. Florence, Charles Kemble Mason, Charles Walcot, John Brougham, Mrs. Skerrett, Mrs. Maeder, and others; and presented "The Lady of Lyons," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Love's Sacrifice," and "The Patrician's Daughter." Closing her season abruptly, she soon after went to California,

where she regularly entered upon the career of an actress, assumed the management of one of the theatres, was fairly prosperous, but returned at last to the East and to retirement.

Tracing her private career in the hope of finding new material for the renewal of his claim, resisting payment of the alimony which caused new involvements, Forrest kept himself upon the rack, even while seeking rest and repose in his domestic circle.

Mr. Alger has given us a beautiful picture of one of the happy scenes of his life at this time. "Early one summer morning, while visiting at Forrest's home, Oakes was seen wrapped in a silk morning-gown of George Frederick Cooke, with a wig of John Phillip Kemble on his head, and a sword of Edmund Kean by his side, tackled between the thills of a heavy stone roller, rolling the garden-walks to earn his breakfast. Forrest was behind him urging him forward. Henrietta and Eleanor Forrest gazed out of a window at the scene in amazement, until its amusing significance broke upon them, when their frolicsome peals of laughter caused the busy pair of laborers below to pause in their task and look up."

A number of Forrest's friends co-operated to obtain a marble statue of him as *Coriolanus*, and he readily lent his aid, giving sittings and such advice as the sculptor solicited. The celebrated Thomas Ball was chosen as the artist best fitted to perform the work. When completed, it was intended by Forrest to adorn the future retreat for actors, the idea of which he had never abandoned, although Fonthill had passed out of

his hands. This statue is now one of the chief points of interest in the Actors' Home at Springbrook.

Much of Forrest's time, during the interval of rest from theatrical labor, was given to the better investment of his fortune, which had now grown to such a bulk as to need the most thoughtful attention. While in his home enjoyments he kept up the studies which related to his art. Here, in the comfortable library, surrounded by his books and his few friends, he discoursed upon the stage and its past glories, with the history and traditions of which his mind was stored, or read from some poet lines which he loved, and to which his matchless voice lent new meaning.

He was always courteously willing to give private exhibitions of his powers in the recitation of selections, both humorous and pathetic. At a dinner-table, where his associates were to his liking, he was a decided addition to the merriment of the party, while as a story-teller he had surpassing power. He visited the theatres regularly, his entrance being the signal for a general murmur of approbation, and sometimes of audible applause.

The promise he had made to his friend Oakes, to abstain from professional duty for a period of years, had been well kept, but it was soon to be revoked and another era in his career to commence.

## CHAPTER IX.

### MATURITY.

In answer to numerous inquiries, Mr. James Rees, the confidential friend of Mr. Forrest, authoritatively published the following during the year 1860:—

### "TO CORRESPONDENTS. EDWIN FORREST.

"The question is so frequently asked in relation to the probability of this gentleman's appearing again on the stage, that we feel it a duty to answer such questions to the best of our knowledge, as we know it is not idle curiosity which prompts them.

"These inquiries, written in many instances by persons evidently anxious to witness his powerful impersonations of character, are highly flattering to this inimitable artist. They all develop to us the fact that thousands are so sickened, and in some instances disgusted, at the present state of the drama, and the paucity of genuine talent in our midst, that a change for the benefit of the whole body politic is most anxiously desired.

"To end the anxiety manifested, we can state with confidence that Mr. Forrest will appear on the stage again, and this event, so long looked for, will most probably take place in the fall or winter season of the present year. June, 1860."

Accordingly, on the 17th of September, after an absence of nearly four years, Edwin Forrest again appeared on the stage. He was engaged by James Nixon, and began his contract of one hundred nights at Niblo's Garden, New York, in the character of *Hamlet*.

During the retirement of Forrest, his fame had continued to increase. A new generation of play-goers, who had only read of the giant, were now eager to see him of whom they had heard so much. The panic of 1857, which had paralyzed all industries, and had closed the theatres, or at all events had ruined the managers and beggared the actors, was now passing away, and a better feeling was exhibited. During these years, also, new candidates for public favor had arisen in the tragic and comic field. The city of New York was passing rapidly into the great metropolis which it has since become. Great political questions were agitating the country, and parties were dividing the nation into sectional lines which threatened ominous divisions.

The theatres of New York, during the years of 1857–60, were not without attractions of a sterling character, notwithstanding the lugubrious picture drawn in Forrest's card. The old drama had not yet surrendered to the sensational enemy. "Hamlet" was being acted at four theatres at one time, and by leading favorites in each: by E. L. Davenport at the Winter Garden, by the grand old veteran, James Wallack, Sen., at his own theatre, and by two other gentlemen in East side houses. During this period a revival of "The Winter's Tale" was inaugurated at Burton's Theatre, which surpassed all previous efforts in the Shaksperean field,

Leontes being played by the younger J. W. Wallack, a man whose genius was the delight of our stage, whose versatility was the marvel of his fellows, and whose genial nature and unselfish manhood were the admiration of his friends.

Burton played Autolycus as he only could play it, while such actors as Fisher and Setchell, such actresses as Mrs. Amelia Parker and Sara Stevens, filled the other rôles. The writer had the honor of playing Florizel in this cast. Charles Mathews had returned to America for the third time, and shared in the revival of "Twelfth Night" with Burton, Brougham, and others of the Metropolitan Theatre Company. It was during this interval also that Charlotte Cushman reappeared on the stage after her many years of retirement, and under Burton's management gave a series of her grand performances at the same house, which filled the theatre and confirmed her fame.

During this time also the coming glories of the Wallack *régime* were foretold in the foresight and genius of the master. The elder of that name took a falling property, gave it all the vitality of his own experienced management, and laid the foundation for the great fame which has been so well perpetuated in the ability of his gifted son, Lester Wallack.

Here were shown the first-fruits of that versatile genius which has for nearly twenty-five years supplied the theatres of two nations. Here began the modern domestic drama from which the mechanical, the sensational, and the realistic derived their inspiration, but which they have so poorly and feebly imitated.

The first of the grand series of Boucicault's plays was the three-act melodrama of "Jessie Brown." The production of that piece at Wallack's marks the line which separates the theatre of the past from that of the present in America. Matilda Heron had but a few months before appeared in a play full of turgid declamation and pointless situations,—a supplement to her success in "Camille." It had failed, but the cause was found in the desire of the people for effects of a more natural character. In "Jessie Brown," the situation, the dialogue, and the superb acting at once changed the indifferent spectator into an eager and enthusiastic listener.

The same change which had taken place in the field of comedy and domestic drama was apparent in the tragic drama as well. From the far West a youth had come who bore a magical name, associated with the past glories of a great father, of whom he was said to be in every way worthy. Edwin Booth was hailed as the "Hope of the Living Drama" by the most careful of critics, and accepted by the public as the exemplar of the new idea in tragedy. His youth, beauty, and superior fitness marked him as a leader in the school of which he was to be the restorer, — the impulsive, passionate school of tragedy; stilted declamation and slow solemnity giving way before the "fiery onset" of this rapidly moving, nervous embodiment of all the passions. His appearance in New York in 1857 was the event which rallied to his side many of those who had been adherents of his great father, while the new auditors the younger generation seeking for their ideal - found

it in this dark-haired, brown-eyed youth, who had seized the sceptre of the stage with an audacious hand, and was manifesting power to retain it. Edwin Booth in two years had attracted a following large in numbers, and of that class called "select" in quality, although there were those who scorned the claim that he was in any way the rival of the master who was now in retirement.

The hold which the new tragedian had taken upon the public, the interest which his youth and talent excited, the personal resemblance he bore in certain respects to the elder Booth, many of whose parts he played, - all these but added zest to the desire which had lately found open expression that the veteran should reappear. And when Forrest did step upon the stage again, it was to find that these changes had taken place in his retirement. He who had surpassed other generations of great actors, and outlived them all; he who had borne in triumph the high name of America's greatest tragedian for years unchallenged, - now confronted a changing taste, a new era, and a new rival. With the elder lay all the traditions of the old drama, with the younger all the elements which were fusing into the The one was supported and maintained by the generations which had grown up with the veteran, had seen the various stages of his career passed triumphantly, and who sought no improvement; the other represented the hopeful expression of the new generation which forms its own ideas by the impressions of its times, and is not slavishly bound to the past.

As yet all the glory lay with the veteran. The deep

interest which he had excited during the trial, the gossip of the idle, the admiration of the crowd, even the long retirement, only increased the curious interest which centred round his historic name; all the invectives which had been hurled against him by enemies, all the stories of his gloomy and despotic nature, all the caricatures which malice had created, all the humorous anecdotes of which he was the hero or the victim, only excited the curiosity of the public.

Upon his opening night, at Niblo's Garden, the seats were sold at auction, and the throngs which were turned away nightly from the doors exceeded those which found admittance. His engagement ran for one hundred nights, to be divided between many of the largest cities. He acted but three nights of each week, and his services were rewarded with one half of the gross receipts.

In New York he played "Hamlet," "King Lear," "Othello," "Macbeth," "Richard III.," "The Gladiator," "Damon and Pythias," "Richelieu," "Jack Cade," "Virginius," and "Metamora," supported by Frederick B. Conway (as the *Ghost, Iago*, and *Macduff*), Charles Fisher (as *Polonius*, first time, and *Cassio*), Daniel H. Harkins (as *Horatio*), John Chester (as *Roderigo*), Madame Ponisi (as *Queen Gertrude*, *Emilia*, and *Lady Macbeth*), and Mrs. F. B. Conway (as *Ophelia*, *Desdemona*, etc.).

His success in Philadelphia rivalled that of New York, and he closed his engagement with Mr. Nixon with a grand margin of profits to both. His performances in that city were confined to his Shaksperean parts by request, and the glad manager issued a consenting card to the public which demanded this concession. Even *Spartacus* and *Tell*, the *Broker* and *Cade*, were set aside for the immortal heroes of Shakspere.

The breaking out of the Rebellion gave a new impetus to the business of the theatres. The cities were filled by those who had heretofore lived a life of retirement in the provinces; the activity of reviving trade, based on the demand for supplies for the army, brought many play-goers to the cities, and the officers and soldiers on duty or on leave made up an addition to the resident public which accounted for the renewal of prosperity. To many of these Forrest was only known by his colossal fame, and eagerness to see him made his audiences larger than before. Prices were raised, and freely paid by the multitude who had for the first time an opportunity of gratifying a long-cherished wish. He played an enormous engagement under William Wheatley's management at Niblo's Garden in the autumn of 1862 with John McCullough, L. R. Shewell, J. G. Burnett, Edward Lamb, J. W. Collier, George Becks, Thomas E. Morris, Mrs. Mary Gladstane, Mrs. J. R. Scott, Madame Ponisi, Miss Mary Wells, and Miss Josephine Henry in his support; and under the same management appeared later in the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. In Boston the vast auditorium of the grandest theatre in America was found too small to contain the crowd he drew. He was more eager for expressions of approbation than ever; and one evening, some person having "hushed down" a rising demonstration of approval, he addressed the audience upon the

matter when the curtain fell and he was called to the front, saying that "applause was the reward of the artist, — that it was his due; and he who would rob him of it would pick a pocket."

Severe attacks of gout were beginning to tell upon that herculean form, sapping and undermining it; but he seemed to suffer no diminution of power in the great characters which so well suited him, and he was said to be acting better than ever before. His summers were, many of them, spent at Cohasset, near the ocean which he so dearly loved. Here with his friend Oakes the vacations passed as cheerfully as disease and carking reminders of the still impending lawsuit would permit. He had a keen sense of the sublime in nature, and once, standing on the beach as the sea rushed in with terrific power and dashed the spray about him, he exclaimed, "Let him who disbelieves in an Almighty Ruler stand here and be converted."

He was still growing more and more brusque and reserved. He hated demonstration or display of any kind, and was utterly careless of men's opinions as to his private behavior. Angry for some reason with Edwin Booth, who was his namesake, he publicly declined the salutation of the aged widow of his old friend Junius Brutus Booth, in order to mark his dislike for the son. Standing once in the crowded rotunda of the old Winthrop House on Tremont Street apart and alone, an enthusiastic acquaintance recognizing him rushed across the room and impulsively called him by name: "Why, my dear Forrest, how do you do?" Forrest muttered, "Pshaw," and abruptly turned away, where-

upon the disappointed and crestfallen man replied, "Well, sir, I've heard you were rude and selfish, but I never supposed you were a brute till now." With an angry glare they separated.

His charities were as singular as his behavior at this time. He loved to perform such duties secretly, and disliked being reminded of them. It is said that his strange movements once attracted the attention and fired the curiosity of one of his friends, who had observed that he visited a certain poor neighborhood in New York, and always evaded reply when questioned on the subject. He was followed and traced to a miserable tenement, where he made a short stay, evidently desiring secrecy in his going and coming. Upon inquiry it was learned that he had found a worthy man who had met with disaster through illness. Forrest had given him a home for himself and his family, and never let him know even the name of his benefactor. When his friends afterwards alluded to this incident, and assured Forrest that his kindness was discovered, he replied, "You have taken from me the sweetest pleasure of my charity, and injured the family of that poor man. I will go there no more."

He gave his check for one thousand dollars for the use of the Sanitary Fund early in the war, and although a Democrat, and bitterly opposed to the party in power, he bore a sincere love for the Union, and never faltered in his belief in the perpetuity of our institutions. He refused to play for a benefit for the relief of a certain charity; but he sent privately his check for two hundred and fifty dollars to the committee. He thus

gained all the ignominy arising from the public announcement of his refusal to play, and left men ignorant of his private bounty.

He had grown more exacting than ever about his duty to his art, and more intolerant than ever of those who were negligent. His rebuke was unsparing for each offence against promptness, and oftentimes the quiet rehearsals were enlivened by an eloquent speech from the irate tragedian upon the charms of punctuality and the guilt of negligence.

John McCullough, then his chief support, gives an amusing account of one of his outbreaks. An actor was late for rehearsal, and the rest of the company, including the star, were compelled to await his arrival. He came at last, and was met by a storm of abuse from Forrest. He stammered out an excuse, but it availed nothing. Forrest went on excitedly, and, after animadverting upon the sin of indolence, said: "Mr. McCullough has been with me for years, he has never been for one moment late, and I hope, sir, you, who seem to require a model for your conduct, will imitate that gentleman." The rehearsal went on, and presently McCullough's cue for entrance was given. He came not! calls were made, minutes passed; there was an awful pause, during which the color came and went in Forrest's angry face. When the delay had become serious and the silence awful, the actor who had been advised to follow McCullough's example dared, slyly and maliciously, to approach the irate star and say, "Sir, you will have to give me a new model." Forrest, not deigning a reply, turned to the stage manager and

said: "Good God, sir, go on with the business, and send for McCullough!" The settlement with that gentleman, when they met, is described as a stormy one. This was not the first or last outbreak of Forrest which ended in his own defeat, the humor of others often turning aside his wrath.

In 1863 the writer of this memoir, then young in his profession, was supporting Mrs. D. P. Bowers at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. Mr. Forrest was in retirement, living at his Broad Street home, but each evening he came to the theatre and occupied a box, an attentive listener. Before the close of the play on several occasions, he stepped behind the scenes and sent for the young actor. With a word of advice upon the higher or lower tone in a speech, or a correction of emphasis or pronunciation, perhaps now and then a word of praise, politely and shortly he would say "Good night," and leave abruptly. His suggestions were always gratefully received, and he seemed to take pleasure in repeating them. On one occasion, when he had sent in a card correcting a pronunciation, on the ground of the use of too many syllables in a certain word, and the reply went back doubting the truth of his hint, a reference was recommended to the dictionary, in which, it is needless to say, the veteran was found correct.

It was about this time, or a little earlier, that Barry Sullivan played an engagement at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. It was said that he possessed all the worst faults of Macready; and his innovations in the text of his parts and his mechanical style made him unpopular with Forrest, who perhaps saw in him

some of the qualities which recalled his quarrel with Macready, and hence he could do him no justice. He had shown his dislike of many changes in the production of "Hamlet" during the first two acts, as given by Sullivan, and his bearing had attracted the attention of Sullivan and the audience. Hamlet bided his time, and when he came to a point in the second act which he thought offered him the opportunity he wanted, he took Guildenstern and Rosencrantz aside, and, advancing towards the box in which Forrest sat, pointed his finger at him and said, in the words of the text, "Do you see that great baby, yonder? He is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts." Mingled hisses and applause were the actor's reward for what was certainly "a hit, a palpable hit," although perhaps not in the best of taste.

The new spirit which had entered the dramatic profession was inimical to the old actors, - to the old methods. English importations had filled the American theatres with men and women who returned Forrest scorn for scorn. England furnished the nursery for what is falsely called burlesque, —a style of performance which tickled the diseased palates of those who, by their encouragement, shared in the ignominy belonging to the performance. The votaries of this disgraceful school, who tried to attach themselves to the decent drama, made no scruple of holding up to derision all that was grand or noble in old plays or old players. Caricature imitations of the manner of Forrest provoked the laughter of the public; and no burlesque was complete which did not give some new feature of personal or mental characteristics of the tragedian. It is to the credit of the American actors of to-day that all this innovation, which is now happily losing its savor, from simple inability to go further in slander, belongs to another nation, to another order. Against the reign of filth and all indecency, as represented in the orgies of the "Black Crook," or the naked inanities of the female burlesque or blond absurdities, Forrest, and the American stage generally, opposed the text of Shakspere, or that of the standard authors of Europe and America.

The review of this era of Forrest's life shows us the veteran going beyond the period of production, and approaching that in which his greatness matured. new generation confirms or condemns the verdict of the past. Curiosity mingles with a love of the old literature and the old tragedies; and the past confronts the future on the threshold of the fleeting present. In 1865 Mr. Forrest had wellnigh reaped the harvest of his life, and had gained fresh laurels even while years of labor were telling upon the marked features, and age had whitened the once raven locks. Could he have stopped here; could the veteran have rested his claim to the regard of posterity upon the mature and healthy efforts of his life; could he have retired like Macready, while his body was as powerful as his giant mind,—then the sad sight of the neglected genius might have been spared us, and the historian's duty made more pleasing. One feeble glimmer lights up the decline of this great luminary, and then the night comes, and the end.

## CHAPTER X.

#### HIS CALIFORNIA TRIP.

THE following letters will fittingly introduce the pages which treat of the engagement in California:—

"STATE CAPITOL, SACRAMENTO, April 20, 1857.

"Respected Sir, — The undersigned, State officers and members of the Senate and Assembly, a small portion of your many admirers on the coast of the Pacific, avail themselves of this, the only mode under their control, of signifying to you the very high estimation as a gentleman and an actor in which you are generally and universally held by all who have a taste for the legitimate drama. Genuine taste and rigid criticism have united with the verdict of impartial history to pronounce you the head and leader of the noble profession to which you have consecrated abilities that would in any sphere of life render you eminent. We believe that so long as Shakspere is remembered and his words revered, your name, too, will be remembered with pride by all who glory in the triumphs of our Saxon literature.

"In conclusion, permit us to express the hope that your existing engagements will so far coincide with our wishes as to permit us at an early day to welcome you to the shores of the Pacific, assuring you of a warm and sincere reception, so far as our efforts can accomplish the same; and we feel that we but express the sentiments of every good citizen of the State."

This letter was signed by the Governor of California, the Lieutenant-Governor, Treasurer, Secretary of State, Comptroller of the State, twenty-seven members of the Senate, the Secretary and Sergeant-at-Arms, and by forty-eight members of the House of Representatives.

Edwin Forrest replied: —

"PHILADELPHIA, July 10, 1857.

"Gentlemen, — With a grateful pleasure I acknowledge your communication of April 20, delivered to me a short time since by the hands of Mr. Maguire. Your flattering invitation, so generously bestowed and so gracefully expressed, to enter the Golden Gate and visit your beautiful land, is one of the highest compliments I have ever received. It is an honor, I venture to say, that was never before conferred on one of my profession.

"It comes not from the lovers of the drama or men of letters merely, but from the Executives, the Representatives, and other high officials of a great State of the American Confederacy, and I shall ever regard it as one of the proudest compliments in all my professional career.

"Believe me, I deeply feel this mark of your kindness not as mere incense to professional or personal vanity, but as a proud tribute to that art which I have loved so well and followed so long.

> 'The youngest of the sister arts, Where all their beauty blends.'

This art, permit me to add, from my youth I have sought personally to elevate and professionally to improve, more from the truths in nature's infallible volume than from the pedantic words of the schools,—a volume open to all, and which needs neither Greek nor Latin lore to be understood.

"And now, gentlemen, although I greatly regret that it is not in my power to accept your invitation, I sincerely trust there will be a 'time for such a word,' when we may yet meet together under the roof of one of those proud temples consecrated to the drama by the taste and munificence of your fellow-citizens."

These letters, written in 1857, truly expressed the actor's belief that he would be unable to visit the Pacific coast, on account of the long journey and the hardships of the sea, which he ever dreaded; but in 1866 circumstances had changed his purpose, and caused him to face the long voyage and the verdict of a public which had appalled him before.

The previous year, while playing the part of Damon at the Holliday Street Theatre, in Baltimore, the weather being very cold and the theatre open to draughts, he was seized with a sudden illness, which was followed by very serious results. Suffering the most intense agony, he was able to get to the end of the part; but when his robes were laid aside and physicians summoned, it was found to his horror that he had suffered a partial paralysis of the sciatic nerve. In an instant the sturdy gait, the proud tread, of the herculean actor were forever gone; for he never regained complete control of his limb, a perceptible hobble being the legacy of the dreadful visitation. He still continued to act, however; but the painful stride, the pitiful jerk which accompanied his gait, the evident presence of the disease robbing him of free action in one arm and of one side of the body, were blots which stained the grand picture which he created in such parts as Virginius, Cade, and

Damon. His right hand was almost powerless, and he could not hold his sword. The public, always quick to detect the decline of power in a favorite, and too ready to forget past service, began to desert the theatre when the veteran appeared. He still played great engagements where he had not been seen of late years; but in the old cities his audiences grew more and more meagre, while those of his rivals were increased.

He now, in 1866, decided to go to California, urged again by the manager in San Francisco. He made every preparation for the journey, playing, meantime, in several of the Western cities. In Chicago he gave five performances at Crosby's Opera House, to an average of twenty-five hundred dollars nightly. This gratified him exceedingly, and consoled him for the mortifications he had endured elsewhere from public neglect. To James Oakes he wrote exultingly as follows: "Eighteen years since I acted here in a small theatre, of which the present Mayor of Chicago, J. B. Rice, Esq., was manager. The population, then about six thousand, is now one hundred and eighty thousand, with a theatre that would grace Naples, Florence, or Paris. The applause I have received here has been as enthusiastic as I have ever known, and the money return greater. It beats the history of the stage in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston, and New Orleans. Give me joy, my dear and steadfast friend, that the veteran does not lag superfluous on the stage."

The last line of the above letter shows the feeling of the worn and broken man, as he heard the diminishing applause in his favorite cities. His marvel at the growth of Chicago in eighteen years would have been greater could he have lived until the census of 1880 was taken, when the population had increased to half a million souls, and the theatres to five equally fine edifices, all well patronized. In quarrelling with J. B. Rice Forrest lost the support of one of the noblest and truest men that ever lived; one whose advice and sturdy aid would have been a safe support in his trials, had he chosen to be guided by him.

In April, 1866, he went to San Francisco. At that time the trip was made by steamer from New York to Aspinwall, then by rail across the narrow strip of isthmus to Panama, where another steamer awaited to complete the voyage, which usually occupied about twenty-seven or thirty days. It was the only comfortable way of reaching the far West, as the overland route was then still perilous and full of hardships. Forrest was a poor sailor, and endless anecdotes are told of the humors of this trip arising out of his misery. The vessel on the Pacific side was commanded by Captain Bradbury (well known to his friends by the loving nickname "Yorick"), a type of the gentleman-sailor such as we still see on the Cunard or Inman line of steamers, - hospitable, courteous, but always attentive to duty. He was, besides, a great admirer of Forrest, and did all that lay in his power to make his journey pleasant. Forrest's immediate companions were Mr. McCullough, his chief support, and Mr. McArdle, his agent, - a congenial group. By the midnight watchfire, when all the other passengers were asleep, or

around the table of "Yorick's" cabin, over a bowl of punch, many a happy hour was passed in song and jest or well-told anecdote. Forrest, however, suffered miserably from sea-sickness. On one occasion, worn out with the unceasing motion of the ship, each lurch seeming to wrench his very vitals, he cried out, "McArdle, McArdle! where are you? — "What is it, sir?" — "Tie her to a rock."—"Tie what, sir?"—"This cursed ship; do you hear me, tie her to a rock."-"But there are no rocks here, sir; we are in the middle of the Pacific Ocean." - "Then run the cursed ship ashore;" and with a groan the weary man turned his back to the bewildered McArdle and tried again to sleep. These fantastic outbursts seemed to afford him some relief, as they gave the cue for laughter to his sympathizing friends.

At last a cheerful and quiet Sunday came around. The sea was still, a cloudless sky above, a glassy mirror below, the ship ploughing her way peacefully through the water. Hardly had Forrest ventured on deck when Bradbury, McCullough, and some other kindred spirits resolved upon a practical joke as a relief to the tedium of the voyage. Forrest's dislike of the bigoted members of the Church has often been told, but his respect for the more advanced and liberal clergy is not so well known. Among the passengers was a loud-voiced exhorter who had begged on two former Sundays to be allowed to preach in the cabin. It was the custom of Captain Bradbury to read the service of the Church of England himself each Sunday to his ship's company; and as he had as little respect as Forrest for the Chad-

bands of the pulpit, he declined the request of the reverend gentleman. Upon this day, however, he relented, and resolved that the service should be for the benefit of Forrest. He urged Forrest to attend, assuring him that the divine was a well-known orator who could give an eloquent sermon, and, moreover, a brief one. After much entreaty, aided by the urgent advice of McCullough and his other friends, he consented to make one of the congregation in the cabin. To the divine now went Bradbury, told him that the profane play-actor, the renowned Forrest, was eager to hear him, and hoped he would make his sermon long. The delighted preacher consented, seeing a lost soul in the balance which he might happily save. Far down in the cabin, crowded in by the rest of the passengers, a long distance from the door, sat Forrest, surrounded by Bradbury, McCullough, and the others. Soon after the prosy exhorter began an officer of the ship came to the door of the cabin, and beckoned the captain, who stole softly out. McCullough soon responded to another call, and so on, until Forrest was left alone without a friend. Meanwhile the preacher thundered on in English fully an hour, then, to show his linguistic dexterity, he discoursed for half an hour in the Sandwich Islands dialect. the Kanaka. Each moral axiom, each word of hope to the lost soul, was given to Forrest directly, as if he were the only individual there for whom those words were spoken. The faces of the escaped ones appeared now and then at the window, but the glare of Forrest's eyes as he met theirs was ominous. When the agony was over, the jokers were not to be found until the wrath of the irate tragedian had had time to subside and he was sufficiently calm to join heartily in the laughter against himself.

The long journey ended on the 3d of May, when he entered the lovely harbor of San Francisco, through whose Golden Gate he had hoped years before to pass. The people of that fair city, perhaps the most cosmopolitan in America, were eager to show their affection for this tragedian who had encountered such trials to bring them amusement. It was a novel experience. The veteran actor who had been famous when Telegraph Hill was a barren waste looking out on a silent bay, was now the guest of a city whose population numbered nearly a quarter of a million. The elements which formed the society of San Francisco and the whole State of California were collected from the remotest parts of America, and, indeed, of the whole world. Each State had sent out emigrants in search of gold, - men who could have reached the highest ranks in their own sections, but who now saw in the adventurous pursuit of wealth a field where energy might rapidly roll up riches, and they might return like the Indian nabob, to revel in their newly-acquired means in their old homes. These men had known, or had heard of, Forrest all their lives. Many of them had formed a part of his support in the audiences on the momentous occasion of his reappearance at the end of the eventful trial. All were critics, for they had not been so long in exile as to have forgotten their dramatic experiences, while the advantages which had been theirs in the East made them wise in the selection of their idols. Their earliest actors were Junius Brutus Booth, James Stark, and Edwin Booth in the male tragic line; while Julia Dean, Laura Keene, Mrs. John Wood, Catherine Sinclair, and other well-known actresses were their dramatic heroines. The elder Booth had, comet-like, flashed across their sight, and given them the last glimmer of that irregular genius which was soon to be extinguished in dark night. James Murdoch had delighted the San Franciscans with those delicate impersonations of genteel comedy, the memory of which is now all that is left to us. In a word, the audience before whom Forrest was now to appear had all the experience of old theatre-goers, all the memories of the current theatre of their age, with none of the fashionable indifference to amusement which comes of satiety. It was then, as it has ever since remained, a community where no reputation will be taken blindly as a proof of excellence, but where merit, when proved and tried, will find a warmer recognition, a heartier welcome, a more vigorous acceptance perhaps, than in any other city of the Union. San Francisco has proved the grave of many a great reputation, the starting-point and outset of many a prosperous career. All the earlier fame of Davenport's Hamlet could not save that actor from the greatest humiliation of his life. The theatre, when he played there, was crowded at his opening, but empty before the end of the third act of the tragedy. They rejected Jefferson's estimate of his own powers, by turning him the cold shoulder when he appeared in two characters unworthy of his genius; but they were willing to canonize him when he at last honored himself and them by playing those classic parts of which he is, and has ever been, the greatest exponent.

Forrest was met by the heartiest of those San Francisco welcomes. Serenaded by night, the streets were thronged to catch a glimpse of him at the window; and when the actor's well-known face was seen, a shout went up which gladdened the veteran's heart. Old friends crowded about him to renew the memories of the past, and he must have felt that here, at least, his fame was secure and stable. Places for the opening night were sold at auction, and competition like that which had marked the Jenny Lind excitement in the East sent the price of the first choice of seats up to five hundred dollars, a sum which one eager friend and admirer gladly paid.

When the night of the 14th of May came, Washington Street was crowded for several blocks, long before the doors of the theatre were opened, and when at last the public was admitted, the few places left unsold and the "standing room only" were soon filled, while thousands were turned away disappointed, or lingered about the door to catch an echo of the applause which came from within. The play was "Richelieu." His reception when he came upon the stage as the old Cardinal was deafening. The whole audience rose and cheered the grand old actor, and it was several minutes before he could go on with the text. The reception inspired him, and he played with much of his old spirit; but the audience soon detected that the great man was no longer what he had been, the giant not so powerful as of yore. When the curtain fell, disappointment was

freely expressed by many, and even the memories of Stark and the then boyish efforts of Edwin Booth were recalled to the detriment of Edwin Forrest. A gradual decline in receipts showed a diminished attendance, until, at the end of thirty-five performances, he withdrew, leaving uncompleted sixty-five nights of his engagement.

During this time, owing to his ailments and his want of success on the stage, which convinced him of his failure to sustain the great fame which had preceded him, his temper became more harsh and exacting than ever. The property-man, bringing him the cup which held the sponge with blood for his face and hands in "Macbeth," was harshly asked, "What is this?" "Blood, sir," replied the terrified man. "Blood," thundered Forrest, examining the pinkish color of the liquid. "What an ass you must be not to know the color of blood, in a country where they kill a man a day!" and he dashed the innocent fluid to the floor. The trying changes of the climate increased his gouty and rheumatic troubles, and added to his moroseness. One day, being asked if his rheumatism was no better, he replied, "How can a man get better in a land where they have a climate every fifteen minutes!"

He went for relief to the Geysers, and was carried into the valley whose natural springs are the wonder of all travellers, unable to help himself, and never moving hand or foot without pain. He was lifted to the saddle of a Spanish pony by the strong hands of his attendants, then moved slowly along to what was known as the "Mud Bath," to whose healing qualities he owed

an almost instantaneous restoration to health. In September he wrote to his friend, James Oakes:—

"Here I am still enjoying the salubrious air of the mountains on horseback and afoot, and bathing in waters from the hot and cold springs which pour their affluent streams on every hand. My health is greatly improved, and my lameness is now scarcely perceptible. In a few weeks more I shall return to San Francisco to finish my engagement, which was interrupted by my late indisposition. My present intention is not to return to the East until next spring, for it would be too great a risk to encounter the rigors of a winter there which might prove disastrous. You are aware that the winter in San Francisco is much more agreeable than the summer, and after my professional engagement there I shall visit Sacramento, and some few other towns; and then go to Los Angelos, where I shall enjoy a climate quite equal to that of the tropics. I am determined to come back to you in perfect health. How I should like to take a tramp with you into the mountains this blessed day! I can give you no reasonable idea of the weather here. The skies are cloudless, save with rare and roseate shadows; not a drop of rain, and yet no drought, no aridity; the trees are fresh and green, and the air as exhilarating as champagne."

His recovery was almost miraculous, and he soon set out to visit the wonders of California, the mammoth trees, the valleys, and those glorious mountains whose names are enduring monuments of the great men after whom they are called. While hoping to return to San Francisco to complete his engagement, he received news of the dangerous illness of one of his sisters, and he resolved to start at once for home. On the 20th of

October he embarked, turning his back upon the new world before which he had offered his mature genius, and where his physical ailments had proved a barrier to his complete success. After an uneventful journey he reached Philadelphia at last, where in his own home, with his old friends, he told the story of his travels to loving and eager listeners.

# CHAPTER XI.

#### HIS LAST APPEARANCE.

X7HEN he had recovered his spirits after the return from San Francisco, Edwin Forrest resumed his profession. After forty years of experience in the easier and less arduous paths of the stage, he became again a Stroller, taking up the thread of his life where he had left it in those far-off Southern days, and weaving it into the web of his declining years. Into cities where his name had been spoken of with awe as the great master of the drama, where even actors of ordinary rank and merit disdained to play, Forrest now ventured, with companies organized only to make prominent the central figure, composed of support "caught up in the alarm of fear and hurry," and managed, often, by adventurers who cared nothing for the fame of the tragedian, save as an attraction to bring profit to themselves. He travelled for more than two full seasons, but was no longer able to give performances free from the taint of his bodily weakness, or of the fretful temper which was intensified by the discomforts of travel and by poor food. Those who saw him for the first time were disappointed, as they compared him with the herculean ideal which they had been

taught to expect. The poverty of his surroundings gave to the miserable picture an additional weight to drag him down, and where he hoped to leave a fresh mark of his giant powers, the result was often only bitter disappointment, endured in silence or expressed harshly in satirical epigrams.

Young writers, whose maiden pens had as yet dealt only with police reports or details of local interest, whose experience of the drama extended back to yesterday's visit to the circus or the hasty perusal of one of the stage editions of the text of some old play, now became eloquent as they fleshed their maiden swords in the old and worn armor of the dying gladiator. every town he was assailed by some local wonder, with downy lip, who now saw through what he called the shallow disguise of an artist whose genius had inspired the admiration of the oldest and wisest critics of the land; and he found in one of the most remote of villages to which he had penetrated, led by the adventurous spirit of the money-seeking manager, a young writer who, after having for several days written the coarsest abuse of Forrest, boasted openly that "he had driven the driveller from the stage."

Faults which would have disgraced the merest tyro in the art were unscrupulously attributed to Forrest. All the cries which the school of immaculate tragedy had of old used against him were quoted anew; "robust," "howling," "tiger," were common epithets by which the grand old man was greeted; and all his old service seemed forgotten.

It was indeed strange that he should have lingered so

long before the public, that having outlived his vigor he should have acted when his powers had declined, and when he could no longer give complete and perfect representations of the grand heroes with whom he was identified; but Forrest was not free from the delusion which has ever clung to the hearts of actors, that there exists a sentimental union between the public and the artist. When the force is gone which was once able to give perfect performances, the public too often forgets the glories of the past in the shortcomings of the present. Acting for which an apology must be offered is already condemned, and no service in former days will excuse defects in these. The relation of audience and player is purely a professional one, and the interest which the public has for an actor is that which arises from a pleasure felt in the perfect performance of duty; but while the audiences easily lay aside or forget their favorites, the sensitive actor too often accepts applause as a personal tribute, never to be withheld, until he awakes to the reality with a bitter sense of what he considers the fickleness of the multitude.

Into this error Forrest fell. The idol of four generations could not realize that a fifth would hesitate to accept his great fame, and presume to demand that he should be equal to that reputation, even now in his old age. Infirmity and disease were good reasons why he should abstain from acting, but they were poor excuses for blemished pictures.

In many places he had hardly been heard of, and he was often mortified to see that the box-office told a humiliating story of his want of popularity. He began

to set as much value upon a favorable notice now, no matter who was the writer, as he once did upon metropolitan criticisms, such as those of "Colley Cibber" in his own city. His scrap-book contains, carefully preserved by the side of a splendid analysis of Leggett's or Raymond's, a long, windy effusion of some obscure country novice in dramatic writing.

His old enemy the gout grew stronger, and the cold weather caused him intense suffering. He was compelled often to forfeit his engagements for a time, and take an inverval of rest at some obscure hotel, where poor fare and lonely surroundings only increased his malady and added to his moroseness. In reply to a telegram from a Western manager who asked him if he would play in his city, and for how long, he answered, "Ten nights if the weather is temperate; ten minutes if it is cold." Shivering beside a cheerless stove behind the scenes of a theatre of a far Western town, he exclaimed, "I am worth three hundred thousand pounds sterling, and I can't purchase five cents' worth of heat for my body!" Dressed one cold night in St. Louis for Virginius, in which he stood almost nakedly exposed to the cold air which entered the theatre by a thousand neglected crannies, he muttered to himself shiveringly, "I wish I wore paddings on my legs." A wag who stood near and overheard him said softly to him, "Why don't you, sir?" With a laugh as he glanced down upon his magnificent proportions, his good-nature returned, and the cold was for the time forgotten.

As his gait grew more and more feeble, he was compelled to resort to artifice to conceal his infirmities;

and one of his companions tells a touching story of his suffering in this direction. He had always been used in the last scene of "Damon and Pythias" to leap out of the arms of Pythias, at the voice of Dionysius, and to spring upon the scaffold with a gymnast's agility and perfect grace. Each night now it was his custom to inspect the platform and try this jump before the rise of the curtain. The height - ordinarily three feet - had been gradually lessened at each performance, until, at last, one night it was found that he could not make his step until it had been cut down to three inches. Being asked if it would do, he said, sadly, "Yes;" and turned away to hide the tears that fell as he thought of his decaying manhood. His performances, robbed of the activity of youth or the graceful movements of mature age, became, on most occasions, declamatory exhibitions in costume.

In the larger cities of the East, which he had neglected for years, he was almost forgotten, save by those older theatre-goers to whom the new drama was a stranger. The traditions of the stage were passing into new hands. The Shaksperean plays were receiving pictorial interpretation and an unusual scholastic treatment which somewhat atoned for the absence of vigor in the actors. He who had borne the banner of the old school and carried the standard into the camp of the foreigner was now a forgotten veteran, who had surrendered into younger hands the battle-flag of old. He was present one afternoon at one of the famous revivals at Booth's Theatre. It was reported in the wings that the old master was in a back seat of the second

gallery, grimly watching the pictorial embellishments of one of his own great characters. Mr. Booth, on hearing this, immediately despatched his business manager to offer him the use of the stage-box. They were not on speaking terms, but Booth felt he was but doing his duty to a veteran hero. Stepping softly behind Forrest, the manager touched him on the shoulder, and said, "Is this Mr. Forrest?" "No," growled he, as he turned away and resumed his observation of the play. Riding with him shortly after the revival of "Julius Cæsar" at Booth's Theatre, in which the writer had borne a part, the question of scenic embellishment and pictorial fidelity to place and costume were discussed. He gave vent, good-naturedly, to his own prejudices against what he called the "scene-painter's drama," and said that he preferred to play even Coriolanus in a simple but appropriate setting, to all the gaudy kickshaws by which modern dramatic art is swaddled and smothered.

To add to his trials during these years, he was called upon to part with his beloved sister Caroline. She died in 1869. He wrote: "Caroline died last night. We have a sad house. Why, under such bereavements, has God not given us some comforting, reasonable hope in the future where these severed ties of friendship and love may be again united? Man's vanity and self-love have betrayed him into such a belief, but who knows that the fact substantiates it?"

In 1871 Eleanora, the last of his little family at home, passed away. He wrote: "My sister Eleanora is dead, and there is now no one on earth whose veins bear."

blood like mine. My heart is desolate." He stood beside his hearth-stone alone and hopeless.

We are coming now to the last theatrical performances of the first and greatest of American actors. In 1871 and 1872 he made one of the supreme efforts of his life. His labors were amazing, his travels a marvel, when the state of his health is considered, and his financial success surprising even for one so used to fortune. His last performances were pronounced by his old admirers equal to his earlier ones, and it was claimed that his fires flashed with their wonted splendors before expiring forever. During this last season he played successively in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Columbus, New Orleans, Nashville, Galveston, Houston, Omaha, Memphis, Kansas City, St. Louis, Quincy, Pittsburg, Cleveland, Buffalo, Detroit, Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, Troy, and Albany.

His last engagement in New York took place in February, 1871. He played *Lear* and *Richelieu*, his two greatest parts. The supporting company was poor, the theatre — the Lyceum, on Fourteenth Street — unpopular, and the weather unusually severe. There is something absolutely pathetic in this engagement, so inauspiciously closing a service of half a century. The newspapers gave an impressive emphasis to the occasion, and the voice of malice was hushed in the presence of that strange spectacle of a great light going out in flickers of its old brightness, giving forth only rare intermittent flashes. The veteran writes to his faithful Oakes: "Well, I am here in New York once more, and on Monday next begin again my professional

labors, — labors begun more than forty years ago in the same city. What changes since then in men and things! Will any one of that great and enthusiastic audience which greeted my efforts as a boy be here on Monday evening next to witness the matured performances of the man? If so, how I should like to hear from his own lips if the promises of springtime have been entirely fulfilled by the fruits of the autumn of life!"

This letter shows how little heed he paid to the crippled gait, the feeble hand, and the weakened physique which had once answered the call of his commanding brain. No words can so well describe the impressions of these final performances as those in which Winter and Sedley, Stuart and Moray, used in writing of them. Extracts are offered here:—

"Never were plaudits better deserved by any actor than those which have been showered down upon Forrest during the past week. In his prime, when theatres were crowded by the brightest and fairest of America, who listened spellbound to the favorite of the hour, he never played this character half so well. He was for the moment Lear, but not Shakspere's old man; he was Forrest's Lear. Seeing and hearing him under the disadvantages of a mangled text, a poor company, a miserable mise en scène, and a thin house, the visitor must still be impressed by the one grand central figure, so eloquent, so strong, so sweet in gentlest pathos. He is the King Lear of the American stage; he gave to his children, the public, all that he had, and now they have deserted him. They have crowned a new king, before whom they bow, and the 'old man eloquent' is cheered by few voices. The consciousness of his royal nature supports him, but still he is deserted and alone. He bowed his head slightly in response to the acclamations of those scantily filled seats. But throughout the play there was an added dignity of sorrow, which showed that the neglect of the public had wounded him. He knew his fate. He recognized that he was a discrowned king, and that the fickle public had crowned another not worthy of sovereignty and having no sceptre of true genius. Actors may come and actors may go, but it will be centuries before a *Lear* arise like unto this man Forrest, whom the public seems to have so nearly forgotten."

Writers who had formerly used little delicacy in expressing their censure of his performance now spoke with tenderness and affection of these last fruits of his genius, and recognized a mellowness in tone, and a sadness as of a near farewell, which touched the heart and silenced harsh thoughts. He had lived through a manhood of hard, unsympathetic experience into an age when pity mingled with reverence for duty done. After twenty nights the curtain fell for the last time between Edwin Forrest and a New York audience. But his final stage appearance was yet to come, and it should be approached with a tender sentiment of the loss which was so soon to befall the American drama in the farewell of its grandest performer.

On the night of March 25, 1872, Forrest opened in *Lear* at the Globe Theatre, Boston. The house was crowded to suffocation, and the applause which greeted him was the most flattering tribute of his career. From Mr. Alger's ample biography we quote this letter from a "distinguished author" who was present:—

"I went last night to see Forrest. I saw *Lear* himself; and never can I forget him, the poor, discrowned, wandering king, whose every look and tone went to the heart. Though mimic sorrows latterly have little power over me, I could not suppress my tears in the last scene. The tones of the heart-broken father linger in my ear like the echo of a distant strain of sad, sweet music, inexpressibly mournful yet sublime. The whole picture will stay in my memory so long as soul and body hang together."

"Lear" was played six nights. During the second week he was announced for *Richelieu* and *Virginius*; but he caught a violent cold on Sunday, and labored sorely on Monday evening through the part of *Richelieu*. On Tuesday he repeated the performance, against the advice of friends and physicians. Rare bursts of his old power lighted up the play, but he labored piteously on against his increasing illness and threatened pneumonia. When stimulants were offered he rejected them, declaring "that if he died to-night he should still be his old royal self."

Announced for *Virginius* the following evening, he was unable to appear. A severe attack of pneumonia developed itself; he was carried to his hotel, and his last engagement was brought to an abrupt and melancholy end.

A few printed opinions of Forrest's acting, expressed at different periods during his long career by fully competent critics, may prove not without interest here, as showing the regard in which he was held by men of various classes and conditions on both sides of the Atlantic.

Mr. Phelps, in his "Players of a Century" (Albany, 1880), quotes from the *Albany Advertiser*, October 25, 1825, a criticism of Forrest,—one of the earliest disinterested ones that are preserved:—

"Mr. Forrest is a stranger to us; we are ignorant whether he be a native of this country or of England; upon himself it depends to do honor to the country which gave him birth. Nature has been bountiful to him. His face and figure are such as to prepossess an audience in his favor: his voice (with the single exception of Mr. Cooper's) is, we think, superior to any we have ever heard. This young gentleman we have followed with interest through Faffier, Mark Antony, and the Indian Chief in Noah's play, "She Would be a Soldier." Mark Antony and the Indian Warrior evince, in addition to Mr. Forrest's great natural gifts, a degree of study too often neglected by young actors, and to this circumstance do we attribute the extreme rarity of great histrionic talents combined with the charms and graces of youth. If this young gentleman will listen to the voice of truth, and avoid the destructive school of vanity (which has ruined so many who promised greatly), few, aye, a very few, years will place him in the ranks with our own Cooper, and with these highly gifted strangers, Conway, Booth, and Kean, who of late have 'thrown' a halo over the American stage."

Macready, in his "Reminiscences," writes: -

"... Forrest was the Mark Antony. He was a very young man, — not more, I believe, than one or two and twenty. The 'Bowery lads,' as they are termed, made great accounts of him, and he certainly was possessed of remarkable qualifications. His figure was good, although perhaps a little too heavy; his face might be considered handsome, his voice excellent. He was gifted with ex-

traordinary strength of limb, to which he omitted no opportunity of giving prominence. He had received only the commonest education, but in his reading of the text he showed the discernment and good sense of an intellect much upon a level with that of Conway; but he had more energy, and was altogether distinguished by powers that might, under proper direction, be productive of great effect. I saw him again in William Tell. His performance was marked by vehemence and rude force that told upon his hearers; but of pathos in the affecting interview with his son there was not the slightest touch, and it was evident he had not rightly understood some passages of the text. My observation of him was not hastily pronounced. My impression was that, possessed of natural requisites in no ordinary degree, he might, under careful discipline, confidently look forward to eminence in his profession. he would give himself up to a severe study of his art, and improve himself by the practice he would obtain before the audiences of the principal theatres of Great Britain, he might make himself a first-rate actor. But to such a course of self-denying training I was certain he never would submit, as its necessity would not be made apparent to him. The injudicious and ignorant flattery and the factious applause of his supporters in low-priced theatres would fill his purse, would blind him to his deficiency in taste and judgment, and satisfy his vanity, confirming his self-opinion of attained perfection. I spoke of him constantly as a young man of unquestionable promise, but I doubted his submission to the inexorable conditions for reaching excellence. The event has been as I anticipated. His robustious style gains applause in the coarse melodramas of "Spartacus" and "Metamora," but the traits of character in Shakspere and the poetry of the legitimate drama are beyond his grasp. My forebodings were prophetic."

Mr. George Vandenhoff, in his "Leaves from an Actor's Note Book," writing of Forrest in 1842, says:—

"I was taken by one of his great admirers to see him as *Metamora*, and was surprised to find the house (the old Chatham Theatre) more than three-fourths empty. He, however, acted with his accustomed vigor; and I freely acknowledge that, for power of destructive energy, I never heard anything on the stage so tremendous in its sustained *crescendo* swell, and crushing force of utterance, as his defiance of the Council in that play. His voice surged and roared like the angry sea lashed into fury by a storm, till, as it reached its boiling, seething climax, in which the serpent hiss of hate was heard at intervals amidst its louder, deeper, hoarser tones, it was like the Falls of Niagara, in its tremendous down-sweeping cadence: it was a whirlwind, a tornado, a cataract of illimitable rage."

In 1848, Douglas Jerrold wrote of Forrest's Lear: —

"A more thoughtful, feeling, and artistic display of genuine acting we never witnessed. From the first scene to the last he was the *Lear* of our immortal bard. Not a line, look, or gesture told of Mr. Forrest, but *Lear* was *Lear* from the first scene to the last. We never saw madness so perfectly portrayed. It is true to nature — painfully so; and to the utter absence of mannerism, affectation, noisy declamation, and striving for effect, may, nay must, be attributed the histrionic triumph achieved by Mr. Forrest in this difficult part. By this display of Thursday evening Mr. Forrest has stamped himself a man of genius. We candidly confess we did not think it was in him, and we were much electrified, as was every one in the house. The whole audience, in fact, was taken by surprise; and the unanimous cheering at the conclusion of each act must

Theladelphise, May 23/71, Jabriel Harrison logo,

Shy dear fir.

I had forgoten to sind you the phote- graph of Lear, as I had promised
to do. The not so, but share had
so much to orcupy me, that I comed
not attend to it write yesterdays,
when I willness it to be bosed and
sunt to you by Express.

I think it one of the

I think it me of the functioned of dean I have ever pictured. You were observe it is somewhat different from that me, I presented when I acted the part in her fort Last, the last not be bald from which I have now adopted. As I told you before, where

Speaking of the pretime: I thought the right eye brown is somewhat exaggeration, oring to the tou harty make up; but otherwise I think it perfects, and the effression of insanity in the eyes, is one of the masterly triumpoho of our most difficult ast? When you receive the picture, let one know What Zon think of its - withing bear or barown your truly, / dum tomes.

have convinced Mr. Forrest how much his performance was appreciated. He must have been gratified, for the expressions of delight which greeted him were as heartfelt as they were merited. The imprecation at the conclusion of the first act was most impressively and admirably delivered, and drew down thunders of applause from one and all. We never heard this awful curse so powerfully uttered. It was dreadful from its intenseness and reality. Had we space, we could point out numberless excellences in Mr. Forrest's performance. A more talented exhibition we never wish to see; it is impossible to imagine anything more intellectual. The care and study bestowed upon this part must have been great, and the actor has identified himself most completely with it. It is refreshing nowa-days to see one of Shakspere's plays so brought before us, and we feel exceedingly obliged to Mr. Forrest for having reminded us of the palmy days of Kemble and Kean; and when we add that his Lear is equal in every respect to that of the two mighty tragedians, whose names are hallowed by the admirers of genius, we think we can scarcely bestow higher praise."

Henry F. Chorley wrote of him after his first engagement in London:—

"However much Macready nerves one at the time by the subtle intellect of his personifications, I am never much the better for it afterwards, — never find a word, a look, or an attitude written on my heart. There are certain points of Mr. Forrest's playing that I shall never forget, to my dying day. There is a force without violence in his passionate parts, which he owes much to his physical conformation; but which, thrown into the body of an infirm old king (his Lear was very kingly), is most awful and withering; as, for instance, where he slides down upon his knees, with —

'For, as I am a man, I think this lady To be my child, Cordelia.'"

Mr. Wemyss, in his "Theatrical Biography" (1848), gives the following opinion of Mr. Forrest's acting:—

"Mr. Forrest's Shaksperean characters, with the exception of *Othello*, where his terrific energy in the third and fourth acts holds his audience in breathless amazement, are not above mediocrity; his *Richard the Third* and his *Macbeth* do not even deserve the name; but in these characters which have been written for him, in which his physical requisites have been brought into play in the most favorable manner, he maintains a reputation which will be cherished so long as the American drama, of which he may be called the founder, shall exist."

# James E. Murdoch, in "The Stage," writes: —

"The acting of Forrest was natural, impulsive, and ardent, because he was not so well trained as his English rivals in what may be termed a false refinement. Forrest was not considered as polished an actor as Macready, and was often charged with rudeness and violence in his impersonations, and even ridiculed for muscularity of manner; and yet I never knew a tragedian who did not use all his physical power in reaching the climax of his most impassioned delineations. It must be remembered that Mr. Forrest was a strong man, and when excited his passions appeared more extreme than those of one more delicately organized; and unqualified condemnation was only heard from those who were either unable or unwilling to perceive that the traits which distinguished our then young actor were really more natural than the elaborate presentations and precise mannerisms of Macready. . . . Although Forrest in his youth had only received what was then called a good school training, he furnished in

his manhood an example of what might have been profitably imitated by the young men of his time who, with all of the advantages of collegiate education, failed to exhibit the progressive intellectual improvement which steadily marked his course from year to year. Many who did not admire his earlier dramatic performances were greatly impressed with his manner in the later parts of his career, his impersonation of *Lear* being generally considered the crowning point of his excellence. Mr. Longfellow, who did not admire Mr. Forrest as *Jack Cade* or *The Gladiator*, speaking of his *Lear*, said it was a noble performance, well worthy the admiration of the lovers of good acting."

Mr. Charles T. Congdon, in his "Reminiscences of a Journalist" (1880), writes:—

"The transition from this delicate triumph of the dramatic art to the gladiatorial exhibitions of Mr. Edwin Forrest is like passing from the musical meadows of Arcadia to the fields of Bashan, resonant with bovine bellowers. As an American, I am under constitutional obligations to declare Mr. Forrest the finest tragic actor of this or of any age; but as a man and a critic, I resolutely refuse to say anything of the sort. 'If this be treason,' as Patrick Henry said, 'make the most of it!' Fanny Kemble, somewhere about 1832, during her first theatrical triumphs in the United States, went down to the Bowery Theatre to see the young tragedian about whom there was so much talk; and I think her sole criticism upon him in her diary is, 'What a mountain of a man!' Well, he was tall and he was muscular. Such calves as his I have seldom seen. It was with admirable instinct that Dr. Bird wrote for this large person the play of 'The Gladiator.' He was born for single combat. The Macduff with whom he contended had a hard time of it, nor did he easily succumb to the most valiant Richmond. Supernumeraries did not like to be handled by him when the business required pulling about and mauling. The Messenger in 'Damon and Pythias' always played the part at the risk of his bones when Mr. Forrest delineated the patriotic Syracusian. Of course, all this mastodonian muscularity was a disadvantage in characters of predominating intellect, like Hamlet, with which our actor never meddled without reminding us of a bull in a china-shop. The merits of Mr. Forrest were those which might be acquired by long experience of the stage, and by many opportunities of practising at the expense of the public. Sometimes, when he had only to manage a few lengths of stately declamation, he succeeded in making an impression upon the judicious. With such a frame, and a good costume, it would have been strange if he had altogether missed dignity; but he was not over-burthened with intellectual perceptions, and, generally speaking, whatever he played he was the same man. One remembers him, not as Macbeth, nor even as Spartacus or Metamora, but as the Great American Tragedian. Actors are not usually good judges of dramas; but it would be impossible for a player of the least literary instinct to go on acting year after year in such a farrago of bombast and bad rhetoric as poor John Augustus Stone's aboriginal drama of 'Metamora.' Mr. Stone did what he could to atone for the injury which he had inflicted upon the world by the production of this play and another, equally bad, which he wrote for Yankee Hill. He drowned himself on June 1, 1834, in the Schuylkill River. We will accept the presumptive apology. Mr. Forrest went on playing those parts specially written for his private legs and larynx, to the end. One does not understand why he did not lay them aside after the full development of his Shaksperean aspirations. that he had dim notions of the faults of his acting, and

that he tried a little to be less outrageous; but he was rather worse when he attempted to be quiet than when he o'erdid Termagant and out-Heroded Herod. Any attempt to utter anything sotto voce instantly suggested suffocation. Nor could Mr. Forrest move his ponderous limbs with ease, except in garments of the loosest description; in a part like Claude Melnotte, demanding modern apparel, he was like the Farnese Hercules in a dress-coat. He had some original business, but it was not good; even if it had been better, he would have spoiled it by over-consciousness and by thrusting it upon the attention of the house."

Hon. Wm. B. Maclay, of New York, after Forrest's death, wrote:—

"Some friends of Mr. Forrest wishing to have a marble statue of him in one of his characters, and long divided in opinion which one to select, ultimately decided upon Coriolanus, in accordance with the actor's own preference. It was indeed a character worthy of being classed with his Lear, Damon, and Richelieu. I first saw him in the part at the old Park, in 1837. He was never a favorite at that theatre, and only three years before he had played an engagement there to very poor houses, as the receipts of the treasury, that unerring barometer, show. "Hamlet," \$362.75; "King Lear," \$205; "Othello," \$385; while the engagement of Fanny Kemble, immediately following, was a remarkable contrast. Her Lady Macbeth drew to the treasury \$1,129.50; Bianca, \$765; and "The Hunchback," \$1,526.50. After an interval of many years Forrest appeared as Coriolanus at the Broadway Theatre, in one of the longest and most successful of his engagements in New York. Any careful observer who had had the advantage of seeing him on both the

occasions when he played the part must have been impressed with the more perfect conception of the poet which additional study and experience of the stage enabled him to present. Sir Walter Scott deemed it fortunate that Kemble had never seen Garrick in Hamlet. was no disadvantage to Forrest that he had never seen any of his predecessors, good or bad, in the character of Coriolanus. We were spared a copy, a substitute, an imitation. Instead of following the line of precedents, he had surrendered himself to reflection and study as guides to a mastery of the character. Throughout the whole performance there was a freshness, a vigor, an individuality which distinguished it from any other, and which afforded a remarkable illustration of the scope for differing, yet original conceptions that have given to the drama such deserved pre-eminence among the imitative arts. So admirable was this delineation, that the spectator lost sight of the actor. He saw Forrest, but thought only of Coriolanus. He was transported to the heart-stirring siege of Corioli, stood in the market-place in Rome, mingled in the procession to the Capitol, and felt appalled when he beheld the illustrious exile standing in majestic silence before the statue of Mars. . . . But the crowning triumph of Forrest was in the closing scene of Act III., when the banishment of Coriolanus is announced by Brutus, amid the huzzas of the populace. The stage of the Broadway Theatre had even more than the usual gradual elevation as it receded from the footlights. In the position where Forrest stood he seemed to have acquired additional height, as with flashing eyes and dilated form he rushed towards the retreating rabble, and thundered out his concentrated scorn in the exclamation, 'I banish you!' He repeated the line, 'There is a world elsewhere,' with the stress laid upon the word we have italicized. The idea of the poet could perhaps have been more truly rendered by

the delivery of the passage in a self-reliant monotone, or with the emphasis, if any, upon the word *elsewhere;* but this was only like a spot upon the sun. His reading in all else evinced a careful, and in many instances a subtle, analysis of the text; and his good taste led him to restore the beautiful passage, —

'My mother, oh, You have won a happy victory to Rome; But for your son, believe it, I believe it, Most dangerously with him you have prevailed.'

Its simple pathos did not save it in Kemble's adaptations, nor is it in any other copy of the acted play with which we are acquainted."

#### CHAPTER XII.

#### LAST SCENE OF ALL.

N the evening of April 2, 1872, at the Globe Theatre, Boston, Edwin Forrest closed his dramatic career. The last words of Richelieu, as the drop-curtain fell, "So ends it," seemed to be the fitting farewell of the grand old Cardinal's noblest representative. Shut out from the view of the public he had served so faithfully for fifty years, he passed into the sick-room, and found comfort in the tender nursing of his personal friends. A few days of care and rest did much to restore to his frame the health and vigor which never before had failed him, and enabled him disdainfully to shake off the disease. As soon as he was able to move, he left for his home in Philadelphia, resting on his way only a day in New York. In the quiet of his study and in the society of a few congenial men he spent the summer months, gaining new strength every day, and hoping for fresh triumphs before the close of his life. He could not, in the face of his infirmity of gait, however, venture to play any of his heroic characters, and his friends saw little to encourage them in the hope that he would ever be able to resume his profession. But the spirit of the old warrior was in him still,

and not even the warnings of his last attack were sufficient to keep him in his well-earned retirement. As the summer passed away, the desire for work and action grew stronger and stronger, and he decided to re-enter public life, but simply as a reader of the great plays in which he had, as an actor, been so successful. His voice was still the old powerful instrument of his will, which he could command to instant obedience; while the clear intellect could still guide its matchless tones in subtle and entrancing harmonies. In his imagination he saw grouped before him a new generation of scholars, hanging upon his words, while the veterans who had held to him through good and evil report, against the allurements of change and the claims of younger rivals, would swell the throng. He had still a lively interest in all dramatic matters, and a strong belief in the bright future of the American stage, although he saw his own usefulness near its end.

His first reading was given at the Academy of Music in Philadelphia. The large theatre was only half filled. His selection was "Hamlet." The result was a disappointment to his listeners; and that it was so, he fully realized. He felt that his power to charm an audience had gone from him. While his grand voice was unchanged, the other qualities of his popularity had vanished. He had left them on the sick-bed from which he had so lately risen, and they were never to return. His engagements took him to Wilmington, Delaware, and later to New York. In Steinway Hall, in the city that had been the scene of his greatest successes in times past, his audiences were pitifully small, although not

unappreciative. He went to Boston, and there at Tremont Temple, on the 7th of December, 1872, he made his last appeal to the public in the capacity of a reader, or in any capacity, closing his book upon Othello's death, Othello's occupation forever gone. He felt keenly the realization of the fact that even the dim glories of the reader's desk were denied to him in his old age and failing strength; and mournfully he turned his face once more towards his home. The hand of his friend Oakes was the last he pressed, and sadly prophetic were his farewell words, "Another parting, my friend. The final parting must come some time. I will probably be the first to die." They never met in life again. Forrest reached Philadelphia on the 9th of December, and on the 11th wrote to Oakes his last letter, saying sadly but fondly, "God bless you ever, my dear and much valued friend."

On this evening he had gone to rest seemingly in his accustomed health, showing no signs of unusual weakness, and in no way attracting particularly the attention of his household. When the morning of the 12th of December came, his servant, hearing no sound in his chamber at his general hour of rising, became alarmed, opened his master's door, and found there, cold in death upon his bed, the form of the great tragedian. He was partially dressed, and evidently had taken his customary exercise with a pair of small dumb-bells. His arms were crossed upon his bosom, and he seemed to be at rest. The stroke had come suddenly. With little warning, and without pain, he had passed away. Concerning the immediate cause of his death a Philadelphia

correspondent of the *New York Herald* wrote as follows to that journal:—

"Dr. Gross, a surgeon of note in this city, in his certificate of death, says, 'Cause, apparently apoplexy of the brain.' From what I learn from the servants, I incline to the belief that Mr. Forrest burst a blood-vessel. It was a very favorite habit of his to dress himself in the morning, with the exception of his coat, and stretching himself on his back in bed, in front of a movable mirror, exercise with a pair of eight-pound dumb-bells. When found yesterday the dumb-bells were lying at his side. The cook says, 'A red streak appeared at the side of his neck just before he died.' It would appear from this that he had been taking his accustomed exercise, and possibly with more violence than usual, and had burst a blood-vessel when attempting to rise from a reclining position."

His few intimates in Philadelphia were immediately summoned, among them the faithful Rees, the constant Dougherty, and they at once sent by telegraph for Oakes, to whom the news of his friend's death was a dreadful shock, — a thunderbolt from a clear sky. That Edwin Forrest was dead was quickly known throughout the city; the fact was whispered in hotel corridors, it was mooted on 'change, it was the common topic of the streets; and that an event of unusual importance had taken place was read in men's faces, was felt in men's talk. The electric wire flashed the news to the remotest ends of the country; and wherever the drama had a lover, wherever the reader of Shakspere was found, the loss of the master's greatest exponent was sincerely mourned. Stricken down in the prime of his

manhood, taken away without a moment's warning, the news was scarcely credited. No description of the last scene of all can be better than that of his friend and biographer, Mr. Alger, who thus writes:—

"Arrangements were made for a simple and unostentatious funeral, a modest card of invitation being sent to only about sixty of his nearest friends or associates in private or professional life. But it was found necessary to forego the design of a quiet and reserved burial, on account of the multitudes who felt so deep an interest in the occasion, and expressed so strong a desire to be present at the last services, that they could not be refused admission. When the hour arrived, on that dark and rainy December day, the heavens muffled in black, and weeping as if they felt with the human gloom below, the streets were blocked with the crowd, all anxious to see once more, ere it was borne forever from sight. the memorable form and face. The doors were thrown open to them, and it was estimated that nearly two thousand people, in steady stream, flowed in and out; each one in turn taking his final gaze. The house was draped in mourning, and profusely filled with flowers. In a casket covered with a black cloth, silvermounted, and with six silver handles, clothed in a black dress-suit, reposed the dead actor. Every trace of passion and of pain was gone from the firm and fair countenance, looking strikingly like life, whose placid repose nothing could ever disturb again. All over the body and the casket, and around it, were heaped floral tributes in every form, sent from far and near, - crosses, wreaths, crowns, and careless clusters. From four actresses in four different cities came a cross of red and white roses, a basket of evergreens, a wreath of japonicas, and a crown of white camellias. Delegations from various dramatic associations were present; a large deputation of the Lotus Club came from New York, with the mayor of that city at their head. All classes were there, from the most distinguished to the most humble. Many of the old steadfast friends of other days passed the coffin, and looked their last upon its occupant with dripping eyes. One, a life-long professional coadjutor, stooped and kissed the clay-cold brow. Several poor men and women who had been blessed by his silent charities touched every heart by the deep grief they showed. And the household servants wept aloud at parting from the old master, who had made himself earnestly loved by them.

"The only inscription on the coffin-lid was the words,-

## EDWIN FORREST,

BORN MARCH 9, 1806. DIED DECEMBER 12, 1872.

"The pall-bearers were James Oakes, James Lawson, Daniel Dougherty, John W. Forney, Jesse R. Burden, Samuel D. Goss, George W. Childs, and James Page. The funeral cortége, consisting of some sixty carriages, moved through throngs of people lining the sidewalk, along the way to St. Paul's Church, where the crowd was so great, notwithstanding the rain, as to cause some delay. It seemed as though the very reserve and retiracy of the man in his last years had increased the latent popular curiosity about him, investing him with a kind of mystery. A simple prayer was read; and then, in the family vault, with the coffined and mouldering forms of his father and mother, brother and sisters, loving hands placed all that was mortal of the greatest tragedian that ever lived in America."

Nothing need be added to this. The dead man's will was found to contain several bequests to old friends

and servants, and an elaborate scheme by which his fortune, in the hands of trustees, was to be applied to the erection and support of a retreat for aged actors, to be called "The Edwin Forrest Home." The idea had been long in his mind, and careful directions were drawn up for its practical working; but the trustees found themselves powerless to realize fully the hopes and wishes of the testator. A settlement had to be made with the divorced wife, who acted liberally towards the estate; but the amount withdrawn seriously crippled it, as it was deprived at once of a large sum of ready money. An informality in the drawing of the will involved the trustees in trouble, under the laws of the State of New York, in which much of the property lay; large fees to lawyers still further hampered them; and their income at present is insufficient, without aid, to further the testator's purpose, while a claimant has arisen to demand possession of the estate on the ground of propinquity of blood.

Thus the great ambition of the tragedian to be a benefactor to his profession was destined to come almost to naught. No sooner had the giant frame been laid in the grave than it was shown to the world how utterly vain and useless had been his accumulation of wealth for the laudable purposes for which he had designed it. Of this happily little he recks now. He has parted with all the cares of life, and has at last found rest. Half a century before, in that very city where his ashes now repose, he had breasted the world with his mighty frame, his still mightier purpose; but the weary years had gradually worn away the one, failure and bit-

ter experience had done their work with the other; and as his friends stood about the open grave on that dismal winter's day, they looked down upon the mortal part of one who was not only the last of his race and his name, but who had left nothing of import behind him but his glorious reputation, as the first and the greatest of American Tragedians.

### CHAPTER XIII.

#### EPILOGUE.

OSTERITY deals summarily with the fame of the actor. He must reap his reward while living, and solace himself with the present applause which his audiences grant; for to him posthumous glory is denied. He leaves nothing but the memory of his work behind him. The breath of his fame evaporates in the shouts which make the rafters ring, living a moment, and dying into absolute silence. In all the sister arts the wealth of a dead master's genius is proven in the living effigies by which men may measure his real worth after the creating hand is cold in death. Futurity, however, often rectifies the injustice of contemporary critics; the eloquent canvas, the speaking marble, obtaining the homage refused the living artist. Michael Angelo on one occasion, to gratify the caprice of his royal master, carved an image of snow, on which, perhaps, he expended as much thought as upon his immortal "Moses" or the imperishable Dome of St. Peter's, and which in the eyes of the men of his time was perhaps to live as long as either. Harassed by his fellows in art, persecuted by the malice of his enemies, with few smiles to lighten his burden, few hands to encourage him, no





filial devotion to sustain him, this grandest hero of the Middle Ages heard little more than the echo of the fame which was to surround his memory in later years. Klopstock, feeling too keenly the neglect of his own time, dedicated his "Messiah" to posterity. Beethoven, whose heavenly harmonies were drawn from a soul harrowed by the ingratitude of the world about him, felt that his compositions fell upon ears almost as deaf as his own; and died in poverty, with no consolation but the faith that whole nations yet unborn would chant his praises in his own immortal music. The living estimation denied to the poet Keats has been more than rebuked by the influence his works are now acknowledged to have had upon the poets of the Victorian age, when his "Endymion" is crowned with the laurel refused to him. But while the ingratitude of contemporaries has embittered the lives of poets, painters, sculptors, composers, and authors, the theatre has been ringing with the applause granted to some gifted actor whose very name now is but a dim and shadowy memory. His fellow-artists live in their works; by their works, as enduring as marble, are they known: the actor's work dies with him; his image is carved in snow.

Æschines was not only a great statesman, but a great actor. When sent by his countrymen to Philip, he was compelled to obtain leave from the theatres in Asia Minor, and was reluctantly spared to the state. The matchless art which guided him in the performance of the heroic characters created by Æschylus and Sophocles is now a matter of tradition only; but the

reply to Demosthenes, the records of his public acts. live in the state papers of his time. In all Italy no bust of Roscius can be found, no transcript of those features upon which in the days of his glory the Romans looked with so much pride and pleasure. The passing breath of public adulation, the shout of the populace, the regard of a corrupt court, were the only rewards of the most gifted actor of the Roman world in the days of Cicero and of Cæsar. The art museums are crowded with the effigies of soldiers and of statesmen, but no sculptured marble preserves to us the form of the greatest of Roman tragedians. In the hollow triumphs of a Roman holiday with the gladiator and the chariot-rider, the dancer and the mime, he heard the only praises he was ever to receive; and he has passed into history with no enduring evidences of his powers by which he may be estimated by posterity.

Of Richard Burbage how little is known. Aided by the destroying fury of Puritanism, the march of Time has obliterated even the simplest record of a life passed in the formation of our English drama. Standing side by side with Shakspere, his friend and manager, he shares with him the injustice which posterity has done his fame as an actor, and is denied, of course, the glory given to the poet and the dramatist. No pen can show us the man as he did his life's work in that now historic theatre, no hand trace for us the creator of *Hamlet* and *Othello*, the glorious forerunner of Betterton, Garrick, and Kean. The oblivion into which the fame of England's first great player has sunk still shrouds the personal history of her greatest poet. To-

gether, in the region of mere conjecture, wander the images of Shakspere and Burbage, — the one living now only in his glorious writings, while to the other is denied a habitation, almost a name.

While posterity, however, is shown to be indifferent to the professional merits of the actor, it regards with peculiar and lasting interest all details of his non-professional life. Volumes have been written, and are still eagerly read, relating to the personal career of old stage favorites, whose services and performances on the boards can now be judged by no valid comparison. In all generations the memoirs of the player who has honored his calling have been among the most cherished of biographical books. From Garrick the actor we turn fondly to Garrick the man and the citizen; and, while we can fix in our minds no proper idea of his genius behind the footlights, we can justly admire him as a scholar, a poet, and a gentleman, adorning the age in which he lived, and held in the most affectionate remembrance by his contemporaries, who have recorded his worth. We can find in our fancy no place for Betterton the actor; but the friend of Pope, the pure and cultured student who assisted him by his example in raising the depraved stage of the Restoration into the region where even a Jeremy Collier could respect it, the citizen who added grace to his profession by his unblemished reputation, for him we must have a grateful and enduring memory. To the Kembles and the younger Kean we turn with respect, as to men who filled their high places with credit, and who left their calling nobler than they found it. Even those who denied

the genius of Macready honored the man who called Dickens, Forster, Bulwer, Talfourd, Tennyson, and Rogers, friend; and his last years at Cheltenham, with their peace and rest, were the fitting close of a life personally well spent in the strict observance of duty done "ever in the great Task-master's eye."

No man knew better the history of the drama than Edwin Forrest. No actor tasted so early the sweets of popular renown, no man so rapidly sprang into popular favor, and no one in modern times so long held his high rank in his profession undisturbed. He almost discounted all claims upon posterity in the munificent rewards of his contemporaries. Blessed as man has seldom been with fine personal qualities for a calling demanding so much in the way of physical attractions, with a matchless voice, an industrious nature, and an ambitious spirit, he seemed born to regenerate the stage. He had only to supplement his gifts with the refined study and culture which embellish and crown such royal possessions, to have realized all that the most ambitious could wish. No life is so illustrative of the necessity of character in the working out of great fame, in the proper utilizing of great gifts, as his. Had his patience and humility been equal to his other qualities, we should have found united in him the private life of a Betterton with his own undeniable genius. No man knew the right way better than he; no man, when his imperious will was opposed, more often stubbornly chose the wrong. At the very moment when his reputation seemed the most assured, it received its death-blow, and at his own hands. If his headstrong

obstinacy had but yielded to the importunity of his real friends and his own better judgment at the most momentous periods of his life, had he studied the effect of his conduct upon the then struggling American drama, had he shown less care for his pride and more for his art, there would have been no divorce trial, no riot in Astor Place. The one would have been quietly settled without public scandal, the other prevented by the power which he could have exercised over his injudicious admirers. The first gave to his private life a notoriety which will ever be remembered to his discredit; the last identified him in his professional life with the passions of a mob, and served to increase the prejudice already felt in refined society against his too emphatic democracy. The high place to which Forrest's genius had raised him demanded some sacrifice on his part of his personal feeling; and in his lamentable hastiness he outraged good taste and public opinion, and sullied his own good name.

These two unhappy events force themselves into prominence whenever his name is recalled. They cost him many friends, and sowed the seeds of suspicion and distrust in a nature generous in the extreme in many respects, although harsh and unforgiving. During the later years of his life he lived in a very narrow social circle, surrounded by a few tried companions, but their diminished numbers too often gave a pang of sorrow to an already wounded heart. His nobler qualities were not so well known as they should have been. He showed a strong interest in all young actors who labored studiously for advancement in their profession.

His demeanor was frequently dictatorial and rude, but only where his prejudices were involved. He treated with good feeling and justice his fellow-players, save when his personal dislikes were particularly strong, and then he condemned without reason. He spoke often of the really great actor as comparable only with the loftiest of mankind, thinking, perhaps, at the time, of the greatness he himself had achieved, and of which he was naturally proud. His opinion of his own performances was high, and he placed himself on a parallel with the most prominent men in all walks of life. On one occasion, discoursing of certain severe newspaper criticisms upon the conduct of Mr. Lincoln at some important crisis of his career, he indignantly denounced the freedom with which great reputations were sometimes assailed by the press, and added that this particular attack was only equalled by the audacity with which journalistic striplings had condemned his own performances. It could have no more effect upon Abraham Lincoln, he declared, than similar criticism could affect Edwin Forrest; for he must regard the journalist who could, for instance, find fault with his third act of "Othello" as a man fit only for the lunatic asylum, or an ignominious expulsion down his own backstairs.

Forrest was a great lover of books. All his life he had been an extensive reader, and he often asserted that the successful actor could not help acquiring a liberal education in the course of his work. He was an excellent illustration of his own theory in this respect, for he gained all he ever had in the way of knowledge after he

entered the theatre. For Nature in all her moods he had a profound love and reverence, but none for dogma or the authority of the church. He loved his friends. He hated his enemies. A lie to him was the most unpardonable of offences. He had strong passions, and they often became his master. In frame he was a giant, and he had many of the weaknesses of character that so often attend magnificent physical gifts.

Forrest lived to see the reign of melodrama and of sensationalism. The hero of the old classical arena stood face to face with the light-armed, naked-bodied intruder who had for a time won the popular regard. He fell before it, and his own efforts were neglected and forsaken by the admirers of an unnamable outrage upon the stage of any reputable theatre.

Forrest's greatest Shaksperean parts were Lear, Othello, and Coriolanus. The first grew mellow and rich as the actor grew in years, while it still retained much of its earlier force. His Othello suffered with the decline of his faculties, although his clear conception of all he did was apparent to the end in his acting of every one of his parts. Coriolanus died with him, the last of all the Romans. He was greatest, however, in such rôles as Virginius, William Tell, and Spartacus. Here his mannerisms of gait and of utterance were less noticeable than in his Shaksperean characters, or were overlooked in the rugged massiveness of the creation. Hamlet, Richard, and Macbeth were out of his temperament, and added nothing to his fame; but Richelieu is said to have been one of his noblest and most impressive performances. He was in all things marked and distinctive. His obtrusive personality often destroyed the harmony of the portrait he was painting, but in his inspired moments, which were many, his touches were sublime. He passed over quiet scenes with little elaboration, and dwelt strongly upon the grand features of the characters he represented. His *Lear*, in the great scenes, rose to a majestic height, but fell in places almost to mediocrity. His art was unequal to his natural gifts. He was totally unlike his great contemporary and rival, Macready, whose attention to detail gave to every performance the harmony of a perfect work.

Forrest's voice, as has been said, was powerful and musical, and he used it with marvellous effect. never over-excited himself or tired his listener. displayed at each rising stage of a great passion new capabilities, and when it seemed that his wonderful strength could bear no more, he electrified his audiences by a greater and still more powerful outburst of eloquence. His tenderness lay in the tones of his voice, the almost womanly sweetness of his utterance. His grief was manly, never maudlin or soulless. His presence was commanding and impressive beyond that of any actor of his time. During his life he was surrounded by imitators, who caught only the imperfections, the outward manner of the man; but he founded no school, he created no style of acting by which his followers might perpetuate his methods; and, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again.

The great actor sleeps. He has gone to his last account, leaving behind him a noble charity for his brothers' good, which he failed to perfect before he

died; and a fame such as no American may hope to rival in our generation, the fame of a life-work, if not altogether well done, still done as best his nature ordered: a reputation for noble manliness of purpose, for loyalty of soul. Personally and professionally, he was the giant of the native American stage.

This memoir may fitly close with an illustrative anecdote of the great actor. Towards the end of his professional career he was playing an engagement at St. Louis. He was very feeble in health, and his lameness was a source of great anxiety to him. Sitting at a late supper in his hotel one evening, after a performance of "King Lear," with his friend, J. B. McCullough, of the Globe Democrat, that gentleman remarked to him, "Mr. Forrest, I never in my life saw you play Lear so well as you did to-night." Whereupon the veteran almost indignantly replied, rising slowly and laboriously from his chair to his full height, "Play Lear! what do you mean, sir? I do not play Lear! I play Hamlet, Richard, Shylock, Virginius, if you please; but, by God, sir! I am Lear!"

Nor was this wholly imaginative. Ingratitude of the basest kind had rent his soul. Old friends were gone from him, new friends were but half-hearted. His hearthstone was desolate. The public to whom he had given his best years was becoming impatient of his infirmities. The royalty of his powers he saw by degrees torn from his decaying form. Other kings had arisen on the stage, to whom his old subjects now showed a reverence once all his own. The mockery of his diadem only remained.

A wreck of the once proud man who had despised all weaknesses and had ruled his kingdom with imperial sway, he now stood alone. Broken in health and in spirit, deserted, forgotten, unkinged, he might well exclaim, "I am LEAR!"

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# American Actor Series

EDITED BY LAURENCE HUTTON

"A name
Noble and brave as aught of consular
On Roman marbles."—Byron.





#### AMERICAN ACTOR SERIES

# THE JEFFERSONS

BY

## WILLIAM WINTER

With Ellustrations



BOSTON

JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY
1884

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This Memorial of the Jeffersons
is dedicated by its author
to their famous kinsman

## WILLIAM WARREN,

ACTOR, SCHOLAR, AND COMRADE, WHOSE

QUAINT AND TENDER GENIUS

IN DRAMATIC ART

HAS GIVEN HAPPINESS TO THOUSANDS,

AND

WHOSE EXALTED VIRTUES AND GENTLE LIFE

HAVE MADE HIM

AN EXAMPLE AND AN HONOR

TO THE STAGE AND THE COMMUNITY.



#### PREFACE.

The Garrick period in the history of the British stage, which is the period of Fefferson the First, has been so fully described by many writers that the present biographer has felt justified in assuming that it is well known, and therefore has touched but lightly upon it, in recounting what is ascertained of this actor. A certain amount of quotation from old chronicles, however, has been deemed essential, for the sake of a basis of authority, and also for the sake of local color. In describing the career of Jefferson the Second there was an opportunity to dwell with minute attention on the storied days of the old Chestnut Street Theatre, in Philadelphia, an institution which has never been equalled, for dignity, for intellectual resources, or for splendor of associations, in the history of the stage in America; but it has not been possible, within the limits prescribed for this biography, to give more than a passing glance across that fertile and teeming field. Jefferson the Third, his sister Elizabeth, his wife (Mrs. C. F. Burke-Jefferson), and his step-son (Charles S. T. Burke) are commemorated here, and mention is made of all known scions of the family; the writer's design being to suggest this race of actors in its relation to the times through which it has moved, and to make an authentic groundwork for the researches and illustrative embellishments of future theatrical inquirers. A considerable space will be found allotted to the personation of Rip Van Winkle by Jefferson the Fourth; but this allotment seems warranted by the great importance and phenomenal career of a work which for nearly twenty years has engrossed more of the public attention than any other single dramatic performance of this generation. Not Edwin Booth's Hamlet, nor Ristori's Queen Elizabeth, nor Charles Kean's Louis XI., nor Seebach's Marguerite, nor Adelaide Neilson's Juliet, nor Salvini's Othello has so towered in popularity, or so dominated contemporary thought upon the influence of the stage.

Every writer who touches upon the history of the drama in America must acknowledge his obligation for guidance and aid, to the thorough, faithful, and suggestive Records made by the veteran historian, Joseph N. Ireland. In the composition of this biography reference has frequently been made to that work. Many other authorities, likewise, have been consulted. Among them are Bernard's Retrospections of the Stage, Tate Wilkinson's Memoirs, Ryley's Itinerant, The Biographia Dramatica, The Thespian Dictionary, John Taylor's Records, Cumberland's British Theatre, Davies's Life of Garrick, Gilliland's Dramatic Mirror, H. B. Baker's English Actors, Winston's Theatric Tourist, Cowell's Thirty Years, George Anne Bellamy's Apology, John Galt's Lives of the Players, Wood's Personal Recollections, Dunlap's History of the American Theatre, Wemyss's Theatrical Biography, Clapp's Record of the Boston Stage, Sol Smith's Theatrical Management, Bernard's Early Days of the American Stage, Phelps's Players of a Century, Ludlow's Dramatic Life, The Mirror of Taste, Hutton's Plays and Players, Rees's Dramatic Authors of America, Brown's History of the American Stage, Anson's Almanac, and the Almanac of the London Era. Various private sources of information, also, have been explored, - the writer having profited by the personal recollections of several members of the

Fefferson family, and by the useful suggestions of friendly correspondents, - among whom should particularly be mentioned Mr. John T. Ford, of Baltimore, Mr. L. Clarke Davis, of Philadelphia, and that ripe theatrical scholar, Mr. Thomas 7. McKee, of New York. This memoir has, of necessity, been written rapidly, and within a brief time; yet careful effort has been made to verify its statements and to insure accuracy and fitness in its illustrations. The head of Jefferson the First has been taken from an old English engraving; the view of the Plymouth Theatre from Winston's Theatric Tourist; the print of Fefferson the Second and Blissett from the Mirror of Taste; the two silhouettes and the portraits of Mrs. Jefferson and Charles Burke from originals in the art collection of Jefferson the Fourth. The portrait of Mrs. Jefferson was painted by Neagle, and it shows her as Jessica. Neagle also painted a portrait of Jefferson the Second as Solus. The Rip Van Winkle heads are from engravings published in Lippincott's Magazine, for July, 1869, and the Bob Acres, - obtained from Scribner's Magazine, - is based on an excellent photograph by Sarony of New York. Mr. Hutton has enriched the volume with a copious index, an adjunct indispensable to works of this kind.

The reader will not find here either a sermon on mortality, or a philosophical disquisition on the dramatic principle, or a defence of the stage. It is assumed that the achievements of an exceptionally talented family are worthy of commemoration, and that the greatness and beauty of the dramatic art and the dignity and utility of the stage are known and understood, at least by the class of readers to which this book will come. A simple biographical narrative is all that has here been attempted. The Jefferson Family has been on the stage, continuously, for five generations. This memoir endeavors to trace the history of this race of actors

along its direct, hereditary line, without deviation, through a period of about one hundred and fifty years. The representatives of the family, in lineal descent, are as follows:—

I.	Thomas Jefferson	:				1728? - 1807
II.	Joseph Jefferson					1774 - 1832
III.	Joseph Jefferson					1804 - 1842
IV.	Joseph Jefferson					1829
V.	Thomas Fefferson					1857

Jefferson the First had his career in England. Jefferson the Second was famous in the days of the old Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. Jefferson the Third did not attain to exceptional eminence. Jefferson the Fourth is Rip Van Winkle; and Jefferson the Fifth is his son. This enumeration varies from the one hitherto in use, as it begins with Priam himself, and not with Æneas; with the actual founder of the family, and not with its colonizer in a foreign land. Other members of the Jefferson race have been on the stage, and their names and deeds are recorded in the course of this chronicle.

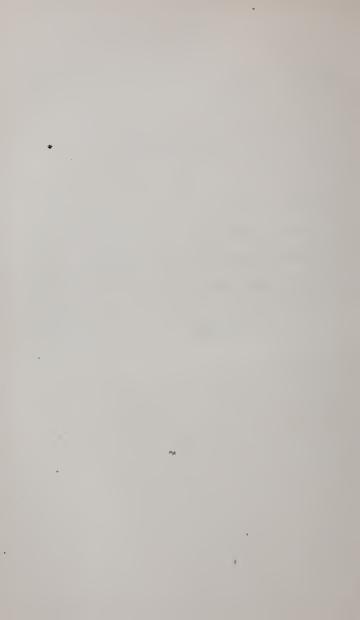
W. W.

Fort Hill, New Brighton, Staten Island, June 27th, 1881.

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#### \*

## JEFFERSON THE FIRST.

1728 ?-1807.

"First, noble friend,

Let me embrace thine age; whose honor cannot

Be measured or confined."

SHAKESPEARE.



### JEFFERSON THE FIRST.

The founder of the Jefferson Family of Actors was Thomas Jefferson, the son of an English farmer, and he was born at, or near Ripon, Yorkshire, England, about the year 1728,—in the beginning of the reign of George II. Nothing is known of his parents, or of the circumstances of his childhood, and the stories of him that have survived to the present day are meagre and somewhat contradictory. One person, however, who had seen him, lived to our time, and gave an account of the beginning of his stage career. This was the venerable Mr. Drinkwater Meadows, the much respected veteran actor, now deceased,\* who saw Jefferson the First, at Ripon, in 1806, a feeble old man, sitting by the fireside, ill with gout and tended by one of his daughters. Mr. Meadows had journeyed to Ripon to

<sup>\*</sup> Mr. Drinkwater Meadows was long a useful and esteemed actor on the London stage. He was a comedian, and he made his first appearance in London, at Covent Garden, in September, 1821, acting Scrub, in "The Beaux' Stratagem." He was the original Fathom, in "The Hunchback'' (1832). His last appearance on the London stage was made at the Princess's Theatre, in 1862, and he then quietly retired from the profession. He occupied, for a considerable time, the office of Secretary of the Covent Garden Theatrical Fund, discharging its important duties with perfect probity and gentle courtesy. He died, at his residence, Prairie Cottage, Barnes, on Saturday, June 5th, 1869, at about the age of eighty. — W. W.

visit one of the aged actor's sons, Lieut. Frank Jefferson, at one time commander of the royal yacht in Virginia Water, at Windsor; and from him he learned certain particulars of old Thomas Jefferson's life, which he lived to relate to Thomas Jefferson's great-grandson, whom he saw upon the stage as *Rip Van Winkle*, and personally met, in London, in 1865. With this reminiscence the chronicle of the family begins.

According to the narrative of Mr. Meadows, Jefferson the First, when a youth, was a wild fellow, dashing and gay, and capable of any intrepidity. His person was handsome, his bearing free and graceful, his intelligence superior, his temperament merry; he was a frolicsome companion, a capital equestrian, and a general favorite. There presently came a time, to this young man, when his skill in horsemanship, his good spirits, and his excellent faculty for singing a comic song were the means, if not of making his fortune, at least of prescribing his career. The Jacobite rebellion of 1745, — the formidable uprising in the north for Charles Edward Stuart, "the Pretender," - appears to have been the motive to this prosperity; so that, if a biographer may allow himself to take a playful view of a serious subject, it is to the determined ambition of the Stuarts to remount the British throne that the present epoch is indebted for Rip Van Winkle on the stage. An important dispatch concerning this insurrection (perhaps the news of Charles Edward's crushing defeat at Culloden) had come to Ripon, and was now to be conveyed to London; and none other than young Thomas Jefferson — who could ride so well, and whose

thriving father could mount him on a thoroughbred steed, for this loyal and patriotic journey — was chosen by fate to be its bearer. He undertook this task, and he accomplished it — through what perils it were idle to conjecture; but an equestrian trip of two hundred and twenty miles, through wild parts of the kingdom, what with bad roads, highwaymen, hostile papists, and the chances of rough weather, was a serious business.\* It may be imagined that Thomas Jefferson was a man well satisfied with himself and with fortune, when at length his mission had been fulfilled, and he was taking his rest at the ancient White Hart Inn, in the Borough of Southwark.

He had arrived there just in time to grasp the extended hand of a singular good-fortune. On that very night David Garrick, the wonder and delight of London, was feasting with a party of friends in that tavern; and presently to the merry circle of Roscius in the parlor a laughing servant brought word of the jovial young fellow from the country, who was singing comic songs and telling stories to the less select revellers in the tap-room. An immediate proposition to ask in this pleasant rustic, for a frolic over his pre-supposed awkwardness and bumpkin humor, met with the favor of Garrick's companions, and so it chanced that Thomas Jefferson was invited to sit at the table of David Garrick. Imagination dwells pleasurably on the ensuing scene of festal triumph for the sparkling country lad.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;In 1707 it took, in summer one day, in winter nearly two days, to travel from London to Oxford, forty-six miles," — Haydn's Dictionary. The ride from Ripon to London could not have been made in less than five or six summer days. — W. W.

He could, it seemed, be entirely at his ease. He sang his songs; he told his stories; he hit off his little series of eccentric Yorkshire characters, and he was the bright spirit of the hour. He charmed his new and fastidious acquaintances of the parlor as much as he had charmed his careless, accidental comrades of the tap; and the fancy that Garrick took for him, on that night, was destined not only to ripen into a lasting friendship, but to mark out and settle his pathway in life. He was not "to keep a farm and carters." He returned no more for a long time to Ripon; but with Garrick's advice and aid, he adopted the stage and was at once embarked in professional occupation.

There is a romantic air about this narrative which, possibly, implies a fiction; but such is the story, as transmitted by Mr. Meadows, and so it remains. Another and prosier account says that Jefferson was educated for the bar, and actually began the practice of law; but very soon, and by a sort of accident, discarded this profession, for the sake of the stage. According to this tale he chanced one day to stroll into a barn in the neighborhood of Ripon, where some wandering players had undertaken to enact Farquhar's comedy of "The Beaux' Stratagem," and there and then volunteered his services, in place of an actor suddenly disabled by illness, to perform Archer. His offer was accepted. He had previously acted the part at a private theatrical club, and his success in it on this occasion was so brilliant that he at once determined to renounce the law and adopt the theatre. This legend furthermore states that Garrick, when accosted by the

new comer, promptly bestowed upon him an engagement at Drury Lane, together with his personal friendship, and that Jefferson subsequently for a term of years shared the honors of that stage with its chieftain. The student of theatrical history, however, without reference to the comparative barrenness of existing records of Jefferson's career, remembering what is authentically recorded of Garrick's temperament and habits, will prefer to accept the more rational and pleasing story related on the authority of the veteran of Covent Garden.

Jefferson, it is certain, never at any time in his professional career divided honors with his great leader. He is known to have acted Horatio, and also King Claudius, to Garrick's Hamlet; the Duke of Buckingham, to Garrick's Richard the Third; Paris, to Garrick's Romeo; Col. Britton, to Garrick's Don Felix; and the Duke of Gloster, to Garrick's John Shore, and this showing indicates the high-water mark of his prominence in Garrick's company. All the same he was "a well-graced actor;" he gained and held a good rank, when rank was hard to gain; and he possessed Garrick's regard much more fully than probably he would have done, had he ever been, or seemed to be, a rival to that illustrious but not magnanimous genius. Of the length of time during which they were professionally associated, there is no positive record. Jefferson seems to have been early captivated by the idea of theatrical management in the provincial towns, and he may have left Garrick's company either as a strolling player or with this other avocation in view. There is an anecdote, treasured by his descendants, that when he

sought that great actor and warm personal friend to say good-bye, as he was setting forth to the rural scene of new labors, Garrick, who had just ended a performance of his renowned character of *Abel Drugger*, in Ben Jonson's comedy of "The Alchemist," took off his wig, after exchanging words of farewell, and threw it to him from the dressing-room, saying, "Take that, my friend, and may it bring you as much good as it has brought me." This relic survived for a long time; was brought to America by Jefferson the Second, passed into the possession of Jefferson the Third, and ultimately was destroyed, together with many other articles of stage wardrobe, which had been entrusted by the latter to the care of Joseph Cowell,\* the comedian, in a fire

\* JOSEPH COWELL. - This actor and writer, from whose reminiscences several extracts are made in this biography, was born at Kent, England, August 7th, 1792, and passed his early days at Torquay, where he saw Lord Nelson, of whom he can find nothing better to say than that he was "a mean-looking little man, but very kind and agreeable to children." Cowell made his first appearance on the stage, at Plymouth, in 1812, as Belcour, in Cumberland's comedy of "The West Indian." He afterwards was on the York circuit, - Tate Wilkinson's old ground, and eventually he became a member of the company at Drury Lane. In 1821 he came to America, under engagement to Stephen Price, for the New York Park Theatre, and he remained in this country till 1844, when he returned to England. He was here again in 1850, and appeared at the Astor Place Opera House; and on April 23d, 1856, at the old Broadway Theatre, he took a farewell benefit and left the stage. His autobiography, entitled "Thirty Years among the Players," was published by the Harpers, in 1844. He finally went back to England with his grand-daughter, Kate Bateman, and died in London, November 14th, 1863, in his seventy-second year. He was famous as Crack, in "The Turnpike Gate," - a musical piece, by T. Knight, first acted at Covent Garden, in 1799, - and his portrait, in that character, painted by Neagle, is one of the illustrations of Wemyss's "Acting American Theatre." - W. W.

that consumed the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, in 1842.

There is still another version of Thomas Jefferson's choice of a theatrical career, and the details of this are sanctioned by several authorities. This account states that when a youth he was, for a short time, employed in an attorney's office, somewhere in Yorkshire, presumably in Ripon, and that he went to London as an adventurous fugitive. The attorney whom he served had ordered him to prepare for a journey up to the capital, and this to the gay lad was, of course, a joyful prospect; but, to his great disappointment and mortification, on the night before the appointed day for his departure, he was apprised that the plan had been changed, and that the attorney would make the trip himself. Young Jefferson, unsubmissive, and not to be thus defeated of his cherished will, thereupon determined to take "French leave" of his friends, and go to London on his own account. A fortunate chance seemed to favor this expedition. A fine charger had been bought, in the neighborhood of Ripon, for a military magnate named General Fawkes, and Jefferson, aware of his opportunity, offered to ride him to London, and obtained permission to do so. Thus provided, it is said, he rode away from home, and bent his course toward the great city, where he arrived in January, 1746 or '47. On April 7th in the latter year he was a lodger at the Tilt-yard Coffee House, and had the extraordinary experience of being blown up with gunpowder, a quantity of which had been served out to the soldiers who were to guard the unfortunate old Lord Lovat on his way to execution. This was Simon

Fraser, born in 1667, one of the three Scottish lords, adherents of Charles Edward the Pretender, who were beheaded on Tower Hill in 1747. The others were Kilmarnock and Balmerino; and the visitor to the Tower of London still sees the axe and block that were used in this execution. Many lives were lost in the Tilt-yard accident; but that of Jefferson was saved, through the chance intervention of a falling beam, which prevented him from being crushed. A short time after this occurrence he was present in Drury Lane Theatre, at a performance of Sir Robert Howard's comedy of "The Committee" (1665), in which the fascinating Peg Woffington acted *Ruth*; and this siren so captivated his fancy that he resolved to drop all thoughts of any other pursuit than the stage.

It is impossible to speak with absolute precision as to the various and devious steps of Jefferson's professional career. He was a theatrical manager at Richmond, Exeter, Lewes, and Plymouth; he frequently went on strolling expeditions, and he acted at Drury Lane, intermittently, from about 1750 to 1776. Soon after his first meeting with Garrick, he appeared at the Haymarket, in London, as *Horatio*, in "The Fair Penitent." The exact date of that meeting is unknown. Garrick made his great preliminary hit \* in London, at Good-

<sup>\*</sup> DAVID GARRICK, 1716-1779. — In John Bernard's "Retrospections of the Stage," Vol. II., chapter 6, mention is made of one of the audience that witnessed the first appearance of Garrick in London. This was Philip Lewis, father of the famous English comedian, William T. Lewis. "He was the only man of my acquaintance," says Bernard, "who remembered the début of Garrick; and it was when sitting at my

man's Fields Theatre, when he was twenty-five years old, on Oct. 19th, 1741, and he afterwards went over to Dublin; and then he was engaged by Fleetwood, for Drury Lane, where he remained till 1745. That year the year of the Jacobite insurrection — he was again in Ireland, acting with Thomas Sheridan, the father of the brilliant and famous Richard Brinsley, in the theatre in Smock Alley. But in 1746 he was acting, under the management of Rich, at Covent Garden, and it was not till the winter of 1747 that he became the manager of Drury Lane. Jefferson's meeting with him, probably, occurred early in 1746. The Stuart Rebellion, which it is assumed had sent this young fellow up to London, was still going on, and did not perish till April 16th that year, when it met its death-blow at Culloden. It is likely that, through Garrick's influence, Jefferson was early attached to the London stage; or, he may at first have gone on a country circuit, and afterwards joined the Drury Lane company when Garrick had become its manager, quitting that theatre at a later time to manage on his own account in the provinces. He must soon have learned, as others did, that it was wellnigh impossible, in that epoch at the British capital, for any actor to win a desirable success in face of the

table, with Charles Bannister and Merry, he uttered an impromptu I have since heard attributed to others:—

'I saw him rising in the east,
In all his energetic glows;
I saw him sinking in the west
In greater splendor than he rose.'"

This is queer, both as poetry and grammar; but it is a curiosity.— W. W.

overwhelming ascendancy which Garrick then maintained.

A period of about twelve years of itinerant acting and perhaps of desultory theatrical management is accordingly to be imagined. In 1758 he went to Ireland, and in 1760 he was a member of the Crow St. Theatre, acting with a company which included Barry, Mossop, Woodward, Macklin, Foote, Sowden, Walker, Vernon, Dexter, Heaphy, Mrs. Fitzhenry, Mrs. Kennedy, and Mrs. Dancer. In that year, or a little later, he left Dublin, in order to assume the management of the theatre at Plymouth, with which his name was ever afterwards associated. In 1764, still holding his Plymouth house, he became associated with Mrs. Pitt, in the direction of the theatre at Exeter, and in 1765, conjointly with Josiah Foote, a tradesman of that town, he purchased Mrs. Pitt's interest in the property and renewed the lease; but in 1767 he sold his share of the estate to his partner, Foote, and after that time he seems to have concentrated his attention upon the care of the Plymouth theatre. He managed, indeed, at one or two other places, and he appeared at Drury Lane, his name being occasionally found in the casts of plays that were presented there all along the period from 1751 to 1776. But he never appeared in that theatre after his friend Garrick left it [June 10, 1776]; and after Garrick's death [January 20, 1779], when that resplendent career of only thirty-five years was ended, he seems never to have cared again to associate himself with London theatrical life. Besides, he was now about fifty years of age, with his children growing up around him, and his circumstances had assumed a settled character, such as naturally restricted him to the safer fields of unadventurous industry.

The rank of Thomas Jefferson among the actors of his time was, undoubtedly, in the first grade, - setting aside the names of Garrick, Barry, and Mossop as exceptional, and far above their comrades. The dramatic period was a storied one, and only a man of uncommonly brilliant talent could have held a conspicuous position in the shining group of players which then adorned the British stage.\* Theatrical powers and enterprises in those days were much more closely concentrated than they have ever been since then, except, perhaps, in the best period of the Chestnut and the Park, in America, and were subjected to a keener, more thoughtful, and more critically exacting attention, on the part of the public, than they receive, or, generally, are calculated to inspire, at present (1881). The stock companies were few, and they were composed of performers who, for the most part, in the vastly extended theatri-

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;Henderson (1747-1785) was the only legitimate successor to Garrick's throne, — the only attendant genius that could wear his mantle. Though it is difficult to compare the others, owing to the peculiarities of their paths, Powell was best in the Romans and fathers; Holland in the ardent spirits of lovers and chainpions, the *Hotspurs* and *Channonts*; and Jefferson in the kings and tyrants. Of the four, Powell and Reddish were the cleverest. But Reddish was differently situated; he lived in Garrick's time, and was one of the many stars, in that Augustan era of acting, whose radiance was absorbed in the great luminary's. Powell, Holland, and Jefferson were all in the same predicament: Mossop, Barry, and Sheridan were the only ones who rose into notice from a collision with the Roscius; but even their memories are fading," — John Bernard's "Retrospections of the Stage," Vol I., page 15.

cal area, and the vastly increased demand and remuneration for theatrical entertainments, would now be "stars." Jefferson's repute, if not surpassingly brilliant, like that of Garrick, was, nevertheless, the guerdon of a tried, proved, and sterling merit. He ranked with Barry in comedy, - excelling Mossop, Sheridan, and Reddish, — but he was not half so good as Barry in tragedy. Yet his tragedy was accounted equal with that of Macklin, the first great Shylock of the British stage; and he must have been strong, indeed, if he could hold his rank against that competitor. The "Thespian Dictionary" (1805), recording, no doubt, the testimony of an eye-witness, says that he "possessed a pleasing countenance, strong expression and compass of voice, and was excellent in declamatory parts." His abilities, obviously, were considerable, and were well trained; and they must have been versatile, too, for the chronicles show that he was sometimes accepted as a substitute for Garrick; that he was even thought to resemble him in appearance; and that he was accounted a competent actor throughout a remarkably wide range of parts. In the course of the twenty-five years, during which he acted at odd intervals in Drury Lane, he was seen in fiftynine characters, and the list of his performances remains incomplete. These parts, and the plays in which they occur, are here named, with occasional explanatory comment: -

PARTS ACTED BY JEFFERSON THE FIRST.

Dunelm, in "Athelstan." Tragedy. By Dr. John Browne, once Bishop of Carlisle. Drury Lane, 1756.

Belford, and also Count Baldwin, in "The Fatal Marriage,

or the Innocent Adultery." Tragedy. By Thomas Southerne. 1604. Altered by Garrick, and called "Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage." Drury Lane.

Lyon, in "The Reprisal, or The Tars of Old England." Farce. By Tobias Smollett, the great novelist. Drury Lane, 1757. Garrick had rejected a poor play by this author, entitled "The Regicide," and Smollett had subsequently satirized him, as Brayer, in Mr. Melopyn's story, in "Roderick Random." Garrick's acceptance of this poor farce of "The Tars" may, therefore, be viewed as an act either of magnanimity or prudence. He was exceedingly sensitive to those expressions of opinion almost always idle, superficial, ignorant, and worthless - which mankind denominates criticism.

Colonel Lambert, in "The Hypocrite." This piece is an alteration of Cibber's play of "The Nonjuror" (1718), which, in turn, was based on Molière's "Tartuffe," and was made by Isaac Bickerstaffe, 1768. The chief part in "The Nonjuror" is Dr. Wolf, "an English Popish priest" who pretends to be an English churchman. In "The Hypocrite" Mawworm is the principal part, and this was acted, with great ability, by Tom Weston. Drury Lane.

Cubla, in "Zingis." Tragedy. By Alexander Dow. Drury

Lane, 1769.

Kathel, in "The Fatal Discovery." Drury Lane, 1769. A weak tragedy by the Rev. John Home, author of "Douglas" - so amusingly described by Thackeray, in the 11th chapter, Book III. of "The Virginians." It is recorded that the Rev. Mr. Home was so unpopular, on political grounds, at the time of the production of this tragedy, that, when the fact of its authorship became known, the malcontents threatened to burn the theatre, if the piece was not withdrawn; and Garrick, accordingly, withdrew it, after the twelfth night.

Palamede, in "The Frenchified Lady Never In Paris." Comedy. By Henry Dell. Covent Garden, 1757. This piece is based on plays by Dryden and Cibber.

Megistus, in "Zenobia." Tragedy. By Arthur Murphy. Drury Lane, 1768. Adapted from the French of Crébillon.

Careless, in "The Committee, or the Faithful Irishman." Comedy. By Sir Robert Howard. 1665.

Oswald, in "King Arthur."

Farvis, in "The Gamester." Comedy. By Susanna Centlivre. Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1705; Drury Lane, 1758. There is an earlier play, with this title, by James Shirley (1637), which was altered by Garrick, and brought out at Drury Lane, in 1758; and there is a later one, by Edward Moore (1753), in which Mrs. Siddons acted Mrs. Beverley, and John Palmer was great as Stukeley. Moore is buried in Lambeth churchyard, near the old Palace.

Trueman, in "The Twin Rivals." Comedy. By George Farquhar. Drury Lane, 1703.

Folmson, in "The Rehearsal." This capital comedy, by George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham (1627, 1688), was produced at the Theatre Royal, in 1672, and in after years it afforded to Garrick, in the character of Bayes, originally Bilboa, an opportunity, which he brilliantly improved, for satirical imitation of the noted actors of the time: and "The Rehearsal," as is well known, suggested to Sheridan the admirably humorous farce of "The Critic."

Cleomenes, in "Florizel and Perdita." Pastoral Drama, in three acts, altered from Shakespeare's lovely comedy of "A Winter's Tale," by Garrick, and produced at Drury Lane, in 1756.

Friar John, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet." This part is now-a-days omitted.

The Music Master, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Taming of the Shrew."

Sir Tan Tivy, in "The Male Coquette, or Seventeen Hundred Fifty-seven." Farce. By Garrick. Drury Lane, 1757.

The Emperor of Germany, in "The Heroine of the Cave." Tragedy. Begun by Henry Jones, and finished by Paul Hiffernan. Acted, for the benefit of Reddish, March 19, 1774.

Mirabel, in "The Way of the World." Comedy. By William Congreve. Drury Lane, 1700. Jefferson acted this part for the benefit of Mrs. Abington, one of whose most intimate

friends he is stated to have been (Victor's "Secret History of the Green Room").

FRANCES BARTON ABINGTON, the brilliant actress, thus associated with the memory of Jefferson the First, remained, to the end of her days, one of the most fascinating of women. She has been amply commemorated in biography. She was born in London, in 1737, and died there, at her house in Pall Mall, in March, 1815. A life-like glimpse of her is given by John Taylor, in his charming "Records of my Life," p. 230; and another by Henry Crabb Robinson, in his "Reminiscences," p. 214. Her maiden name was Frances Barton. She married a musician named Abington, but subsequently left him. Her first appearance was made at the London Haymarket Theatre, in 1755, as Miranda, in "The Busybody," and her last public appearance occurred on April 12, 1799. She was accounted a great Beatrice, in "Much Ado," and she was the original Lady Teazle, in "The School For Scandal," - a part which she made a fine lady throughout, with no trace of rustic origin. Garrick referred to her as "that most worthless creature, Abington: she is below the thoughts of any honest man. She is as silly as she is false and treacherous." Mrs. Abington is buried in St. James's, Piccadilly.

H. C. Robinson's account of her is comparatively fresh to theatrical readers, and therefore is quoted here:—"June 16, 1811.—Dined at Sergeant Rough's, and met the once celebrated Mrs. Abington. From her present appearance one can hardly suppose she could ever have been otherwise than plain. She herself laughed at her snub-nose; but she is erect, has a large, blue, expressive eye, and an agreeable voice. She spoke of her retirement from the stage as occasioned by the vexations of a theatrical life. She said she should have gone mad, if she had not quitted her profession. She has lost all her professional feelings, and when she goes to the theatre can laugh and cry like a child; but the trouble is too great, and she does not often go.

"It is so much a thing of course that a retired actor should be a laudator temporis acti, that I felt unwilling to draw from her any opinion of her successors. Mrs. Siddons, however, she praised, though not with the warmth of a genuine admirer. She said: "Early in life Mrs. Siddons was anxious to succeed in comedy, and played *Rosalind* before I retired." In speaking of the modern declamation and the too elaborate emphasis given to insignificant words, she said, "That was brought in by them" (the Kembles). She spoke with admiration of the Covent Garden horses, and I have no doubt that her praise was meant to have the effect of satire.

"Of all the present actors Murray most resembles Garrick. She spoke of Barry with great warmth. He was a nightingale. Such a voice was never heard. He confined himself to characters of great tenderness and sweetness, such as *Romeo*. She admitted the infinite superiority of Garrick, in genius. *His* excellence lay in the bursts and quick transitions of passion, and in the variety and universality of his genius. Mrs. Abington would not have led me to suppose she had been on the stage, by either her manner or the substance of her conversation. She speaks with the ease of a person used to good society, rather than with the assurance of one whose business it was to imitate that ease."

Col. Britton, in "The Wonder." Comedy. By Susanna Centlivre. Drury Lane, 1713–14.

Mercury, in "Amphytrion." This piece is from the Latin, of Titus Maccius Plautus. It was adapted by Molière, and afterwards by Dryden. An alteration of Dryden's piece, made by Dr. Hawkesworth, at Garrick's request, was produced at Drury Lane, in 1756.

Blandford, in "The Royal Slave." Tragi-comedy. By William Cartwright, 1639. First acted in 1636, at Oxford, before Charles I.

Lord Morclove, in "The Careless Husband." Theatre Royal, 1705. This is Colley Cibber's most polished comedy, and by some judges is considered his best. Lady Betty Modish occurs in it,—in which part Mrs. Oldfield "excellently acted an agreeably gay woman of quality, a little too conscious of her natural attractions." Lord Morclove is her devoted lover.

Careless, in "The Double Gallant, or The Sick Lady's Cure." Comedy. By Colley Cibber. Haymarket, 1707.

Velasco, in "Alonzo," another bad tragedy by the Rev. John

Home. Drury Lane, 1773.

Colonel Rivers, in "False Delicacy," a once famous comedy, by Hugh Kelly. Drury Lane, 1768. Jefferson acted this for his own benefit, in 1773.

Don Frederick, and also Don John, in "The Chances."—Comedy. By Beaumont and Fletcher, 1647. Altered by the Duke of Buckingham, 1682. Altered by Garrick (1773), who acted Don John. Drury Lane.

The Earl of Devon, in "Alfred." Tragedy. By David

Mallet: altered by Garrick. Drury Lane, 1773.

Gloster, in "Jane Shore." Tragedy. By Nicholas Rowe. Drury Lane, 1713. In 1772 Mrs. Canning, - mother of the great statesman, George Canning (1770-1827), then a child of two years, - made her first appearance on the stage, acting Jane Shore, in this piece. Garrick acted Shore. An allusion to this incident occurs in Bernard's "Retrospections" (Vol. I. p. 13), as follows: "At Drury Lane I remember seeing 'Jane Shore,' on the evening that Mrs. Canning, the widow of an eminent counsellor, made her début, as the heroine. She was patronized by numerous persons of distinction, and the house was very favorable towards her. But, independently of the personal interest which attended her attempt, Mrs. Canning put forth claims upon the approbation of the critical. One thing, however, must be admitted; she was wonderfully well supported. Garrick was the Hastings, and Reddish (her future husband), the Dumont. I little thought as I sat in the pit that night, an ardent boy of sixteen, that I then beheld the lady who was destined, at some fifteen years' distance, to become the leading feature in a company of my own; nor that in the Gloster of the night, - admirably acted by JEFFERSON, -I beheld my partner in that management. (Plymouth)."

Captain Worthy, in "The Fair Quaker, or The Humours of the Navy." Comedy. By Charles Shadwell, 1710: altered by Captain Edward Thompson. Drury Lane, 1773.

Sunderland, in "the Note of Hand, or A Trip to Newmarket." Farce. By Richard Cumberland. Drury Lane, 1774.

Goodwin, in "The Brothers." Tragedy. By Dr. Edward Young, author of "Night Thoughts." Drury Lane, 1753.

Jacques, in Shakespeare's comedy of "As You Like It."

Clytus, in "Alexander the Great," altered from Nathaniel Lee's tragedy of "The Rival Queens, or The Death of Alexander the Great." Theatre Royal, 1677. Produced at both Covent Garden and Drury Lane, 1770. Roxana and Statira are in this play. Revived at Drury Lane, 1795. The author, a brilliant genius, died, at thirty-five, in 1691 or 1692, shortly after being released from Bedlam. He was a lunatic.

Sir Epicure Mammon, in "The Alchemist." This piece was an alteration of Ben Jonson's comedy. Garrick acted Abel Drugger, and was famously good in the character. A remarkably fine painting of Garrick as Abel Drugger is in the collection of Jefferson the Fourth, at Hohokus, New Jersey. Garrick's performance of Abel Drugger was so good that an infatuated young lady, who had begun matrimonial negotiations with him, became disgusted, and abandoned her project; while a gentleman from Lichfield, who had brought from Garrick's brother a letter of introduction to the great actor, would not deliver it, after seeing this impersonation — so great was his contempt for the person he then saw.

Garrick's acting of this part is described as follows: "Abel Drugger's first appearance would disconcert the muscular economy of the wisest. His attitude, his dread of offending the doctor, his saying nothing, his gradual stealing in further and further, his impatience to be introduced, his joy to his friend Face, are imitable by none. When he first opens his mouth the features of his face seem, as it were, to drop upon his tongue; it is all caution—it is timorous, stammering, and inexpressible. When he stands under the conjuror, to have his features examined, his teeth, his beard, his little finger, his awkward simplicity, and his concern, mixed with hope, and fear, and joy, and avarice, and good nature, are beyond painting."—Lichtenberg, translated by Tom Taylor.

Leonato, in Shakespeare's comedy of "Much Ado About Nothing."

Heartfree, in "The Provoked Wife." Comedy. By Sir John Vanbrugh. Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1697. Never acted now, and seldom read. Quin was distinguished in it, as Sir John Brute.

Littlestock, in "The Gamesters," a comedy by Garrick, 1758, altered from "The Gamester," by James Shirley, 1637.

Lord Trinket, in "The Jealous Wife," that well known and still admired comedy, by George Colman. Drury Lane, 1761.

Dolabella, in "All For Love, or The World Well Lost,"—the tragedy in which Dryden gave his imitation of Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra," and which he said was the only one of his plays that he had written for himself. Theatre Royal, 1678. Dr. Johnson remarks of this play that the author, "by admitting the romantic omnipotence of love, has recommended as laudable and worthy of imitation that conduct which through all ages the good have censured as vicious, and the bad despised as foolish."

Lovemore, in "The Way to Keep Him," a three-act comedy by Arthur Murphy. Drury Lane, 1760. Jefferson acted this for his own benefit, in 1771.

The Duke Orsino, in Shakespeare's comedy of "Twelfth Night."

King Claudius, in "Hamlet"—the Melancholy Dane being acted by Garrick.

Aubrey, in "The Fashionable Lover," a comedy by Richard Cumberland. Drury Lane. 1772.

Iachimo, and also Cloten, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Cymbeline," altered by Garrick. 1761.

Mathusius, in "Tamanthes."

Horatio, in "The Fair Penitent." Tragedy. By Nicholas Rowe. Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1703.

Balance in "The Recruiting Officer"—one of the finest comedies of Farquhar. Drury Lane, 1705. The scene is Shrewsbury, one of the most interesting old towns in England. Farquhar himself was once a recruiting officer there, and he is thought to

have drawn his own character, in that of Captain Plume. His Justice Balance was designed as a compliment to a worthy gentleman, resident in that neighborhood, — Mr. Berkely, then recorder of Shrewsbury. Jefferson acted Balance, on occasions of his own benefit, in 1775 and 1776.

Tullius Hostilius, in "The Roman Father." Drury Lane, 1750. This is a tragedy by William Whitehead, who succeeded Cibber, as Poet-Laureate, in 1757. It is based on the Roman story of the Horatii and the Curiatii, treated in "Les Horaces," by Corneille, and made immortal by Rachel.

Vainlove, in "The Old Bachelor." Comedy. By William Congreve (his first piece). Theatre Royal, 1693.

Fairfield, in "The Man of the Mill." 1765. This was a burlesque tragical opera, written by "Signor Squallini," in travesty of "The Maid of the Mill," by Isaac Bickerstaffe,—a comic opera, on the subject of Samuel Richardson's novel of "Pamela." Covent Garden, 1765.

Carlos, in "The Revenge," a tragedy, by Dr. Edward Young, author of "Night Thoughts." Drury Lane, 1721.

Gratiano, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Merchant of Venice."

Siffredi, in "Tancred and Sigismunda." Tragedy. By James Thomson, author of "The Seasons." The plot of this piece is found in "Gil Blas." Drury Lane, 1745.

Myrtle, in "The Corsican Lovers."

The Duke of Buckingham, in Cibber's alteration of Shake-speare's tragedy of "Richard the Third." Drury Lane, 1700.

This array represents, of course, but a small part of his professional labor and achievement. On the provincial stage, and when he had become a manager, he acted everything, from *Hamlet* to the *Bleeding Soldier*, and thus emphatically was one who ran

"Through each mood of the lyre and was master of all."

An indication of the professional rank of Jefferson the First—and also of that of his wife, who is elsewhere

described — occurs in a Scale of the Merits of the Performers on the Dublin Stage, about the year 1760–63. This document was printed in a letter signed "Theatricus," published in the "London Chronicle," Vol. XV., and quoted in Malcolm's "Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London, during the Eighteenth Century," Vol. II. p. 247.

MEN.		Tragedy.			Comedy.		WOMEN.	Tragedy.			Comedy.	
Mr. Barry .  "Mossop .  "Sheridan  "Macklin  Sowdon .  "Dexter .  "T. Barry  "Ryder .  "Stamper.  "Sparks .  "JEFFFRSO!  "Heaphy.  "Reddish  "Walker .  "Glover .  "Mahon .	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		20 15 15 8 13 10 6 0 0 8 6 6			10 6 6 15 12 12 8 12 12 12	Mrs. Dancer.  "Fitz Henry Abington Hamilton Kennedy Kelf Barry Jefferson Ambrose Mahon Roach Parsons.		14 14 0 10 8 8 8 6 0			6 18 12 10 10 10 8 8

A reprint of one of the Drury Lane play-bills of Jefferson's time will not be inappropriate here. It is given from an original, and is a reduced fac-simile. Almost every name in it was famous. The Mrs. Pritchard was Dr. Johnson's "inspired idiot," the greatest Lady Macheth of the eighteenth century. The Mrs. Davies was the wife of Tom Davies, actor, author, and bookseller, the man who introduced Boswell to Dr. Johnson. Her beauty is commemorated in a couplet by Churchill, and she died in the almshouse. Woodward was fine as Mercutio and Touchstone, and was deemed the model of all grace. The Miss Macklin was Maria, daughter of the great Shylock.

# Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane,

This prefent Wednefday, being the 24th of October, Will be Revived a COMEDY, call'd

## The OLD BATCHELOR.

Fondlewife by Mr. FOOTE,
Bellmour by Mr. PALMER,
Sharper by Mr. HAVARD,
Vainlove by Mr. JEFFERSON,

Heartwell by Mr. BERRY,

Sir Joseph Wittol Mr. WOODWARD,

Noll Bluffe by Mr. YATES,

Setter by Mr. BLAKES,

Belinda by Miss HAUGHTON,
Araminta by Mrs. DAVIES,
Sylvia by Mrs. COWPER,
Lucy by Mrs. BENNET,

Lætitia by Mrs. PRITCHARD.

In Act III. a DANCE proper to the Play, by

Monf. GERARD, and Mad. LUSSANT.

To which will be added a COMEDY in Two Acts, call'd

# The Englishman in PARIS. Buck by Mr. FOOTE,

Lucinda by Miss M A C K L I N,
(Being the Third Time of her appearing upon that STAGE.)

With a New Occasional PROLOGUE, and the ORIGINAL EPILOGUE.

Boxes 5s. Pit 3s. First Gallery 2s. Upper Gallery 1s.

PLACES for the Boxes to be had of Mr. VARNEY, at the Stage-door of the Theatre.

† No Persons to be admitted behind the Scenes, nor any Money to be returned after the Curtain is drawn up. Vivat REX.

Jefferson the First was twice married. His first wife was a Miss May, daughter of a gentleman connected with the British Navy, and, according to Gilliland's "Dramatic Mirror," he agreed, in marrying her, to forfeit £500 to her father, in case she should ever appear upon the stage. This was at the town of Lewes, where Jefferson acted for two seasons, under the name of Burton, in the dramatic company of a manager named Williams. A number of the ladies of that place, on a subsequent occasion, wished that Mrs. Jefferson should appear in a dramatic performance under their patronage; and, finding Mr. May's bond an obstacle to their desire, they actually succeeded in persuading him to annul it. Mrs. Jefferson thereupon acted Lady Charlotte, in Sir Richard Steele's comedy of "The Funeral" (1702). "The ladies," says the "Mirror," "provided the females of the company with dresses for the piece, and it was played three nights, each person's share amounting to six guineas." The first appearance of this actress on the London stage was made at Drury Lane, October 6th, 1753, as Anne Bullen.

Mrs. Jefferson was a beautiful woman, and of a lovely disposition, and that part of the married life of Jefferson the First which was passed in her society was serenely happy. She bore him two sons, — John and Joseph. The former became a clergyman of the Church of England, and went as a missionary to China, where he was immediately murdered by persons who differed with him in religious opinion. In Ryley's "Itinerant," (1808), a mention is made of John Jefferson, a son of Thomas, who, it is said, "was very tall, very slim, very

sallow, and a very poor actor"; and it is further stated that he was of a religious turn of mind, and was called "The Parson." This may have been the pious gentleman who "disagreed" with the savages. The latter son (Jefferson the Second) became an actor, and, after a brief career in England, emigrated to America, and established the family in this country. The mother of these boys, whenever named in old theatrical chronicles, is named not merely with honor and affection, but with a certain evident wonder that so much beauty could coexist with so much goodness. Even her death bore witness to the sunshine of her nature; for she died of laughter. Tom Davies, in his "Life of Garrick," records this incident, and prettily describes the heroine of this comical disaster:—

"Britannia was represented by Mrs. Jefferson, the most complete figure, in beauty of countenance and symmetry of form I ever beheld. This good woman for she was as virtuous as fair - was so unaffected and simple in her behavior that she knew not her power of charming. Her beautiful figure and majestic step, in the character of Anne Bullen, drew the admiration of all who saw her. She was very tall, and had she been happy in ability to represent characters of consequence, she would have been an excellent partner in tragedy for Mr. Barry. In the vicissitudes of itinerant acting she had been often reduced, from the small number of players in the company she belonged to, to disguise her lovely form and to assume parts very unsuitable to so delicate a creature. When she was asked what characters she excelled in most, she innocently replied,



"old men in comedy,"—meaning such parts as Fondlewife, in "The Old Bachelor," and Sir Jealous Traffic, in "The Busybody." She died suddenly at Plymouth as she was looking at a dance that was practising for the night's representation. In the midst of a hearty laugh she was seized with a sudden pain, and expired in the arms of Mr. Moody, who happened to stand by, and saved her from falling on the ground." This is said to have occurred on the 18th of July, 1766.

It is a traditional remembrance in the Jefferson family that the proximate cause of this catastrophe was, in fact, a rehearsal of Dicky Gossip, by Edward Shuter, who had come from London to play at the Plymouth Theatre. This comedian, the original representative of Mr. Hardcastle, in "She Stoops to Conquer," and of Sir Anthony Absolute, in "The Rivals," was thought by Garrick to be the greatest comic genius of his time. Shuter died in 1776. "I remember him as Justice Woodcock, Scrub, Peachum, and Sir Francis Gripe. . . His acting was a compound of truth, simplicity, and luxuriant humor. Never was an actor more popular than Shuter." - John Taylor's "Records of my Life." "He was more bewildered in his brain by wishing to acquire imaginary grace, than by all his drinking: like Mawworm, he believed he had a call." - Tate Wilkinson. Shuter was a devout Methodist, and a fine Falstaff. The part of Britannia, mentioned by Davies as allotted to Mrs. Jefferson, occurs in a masque with that name, written by David Mallet, and first produced at Drury Lane in 1755. The music was composed by

Dr. Arne. A comic prologue to this piece, written by Mallet and Garrick, and spoken by the latter, made a brilliant hit, the idea being a tipsy sailor reading a play bill, with allusions to war with the French. "The Old Bachelor" is the earliest of Congreve's comedies, (1693), and "The Busybody," still occasionally acted, is one of Susanna Centlivre's (1709). Mrs. Jefferson is mentioned by Geneste, as having played Mrs. Fainall, in Congreve's comedy of "The Way of the World" (1700), at Drury Lane, on March 15th, 1774, for the benefit of Mrs. Abington. Her attributes and rank as an actress may be deduced from these facts.

There is a discrepancy of dates bearing on the maternity of Jefferson the Second, which should be stated here. The death of the first Mrs. Thomas Jefferson is said by one authority to have occurred in 1766; by another, in 1768. The birth of Jefferson the Second is assigned to either 1774 or 1776. Accordingly he could not have been the son of his father's first wife. Yet it is known that he had a step-mother: one cause of his leaving home and emigrating to America, indeed, was his dissatisfaction with his father's matrimonial alliance: and there is no record that Jefferson the First was ever married more than twice. It would be irksome to abandon the belief that the mirth-making race of Jefferson has descended from the lovely lady who died of laughter on the Plymouth stage; but it seems obvious from this presentation of the records that either the date of her death or of the younger Jefferson's birth has been incorrectly stated, or that Jefferson the First in reality had three wives, and that Jefferson the Second

was the son of the second of them. One account of him says that he was born literally on the stage, and that his mother died shortly afterwards. It is a coincidence, bearing on this question of descent, that Jefferson the Fourth (Rip Van Winkle) suffers excruciating agony at the base of the brain, from any inordinate laughter into which he may be impelled.

Tate Wilkinson, in his agreeable "Memoirs of His Own Life" (1790), a work containing several instructive allusions to Jefferson the First, pays a passing tribute to the first Mrs. Jefferson, when referring to the Exeter episode of Jefferson's career as a manager: "Early in December, 1764, I set off for Exeter, where Mr. Jefferson, my old friend and acquaintance in Dublin and London, was then become the manager, and everything then promised most flatteringly that he would soon make a fortune. But the substance is often changed for a shadow, nor are managers' gains so easily amassed as the public can gather it for them. His invitation had double allurement: first, novelty, which was ever prevalent; and next, to see so pleasant and friendly a man as he had ever proved to me. I joined him and his new troop. Mr. Jefferson was at that time endeavoring — not without encouragement to bring that theatre into a regular and established reputation. He had engaged Mr. Reddish\* and many other good performers. Mrs. Jefferson, his first wife,

<sup>\*</sup> SAMUEL REDDISH. — He was born in 1740, became insane in 1779, and died in 1785 in an asylum, at York. John Taylor, who saw and knew him, records that he chiefly distinguished himself in the characters — in Shakespeare — of Edgar, Posthumus, and Henry the Sixth. — W. W.

was then living. She had one of the best dispositions that ever harbored in a human breast; and, more extraordinary, joined to that meekness, she was one of the most elegant women ever beheld."

Jefferson's second (or third) wife was a Miss Wood, sister to a public singer of that name, then somewhat distinguished in London. She was a worthy lady, though less amiable than her predecessor, and unpropitious toward her step-son. She did not attempt the stage. The children of this union were two sons, Frank and George, and two daughters, Frances and Elizabeth. Frank has previously been mentioned, as at one time commander of the royal yacht in Virginia Water, at Windsor. George became an actor, and a respectably good one; and he also had talent as a painter. It is said that a titled lady, resident near Ripon, established in her manor-house a small gallery of his works, and regularly bought everything that he painted, - binding him, by contract, not to sell his productions to any other person. Elizabeth died in youth. Frances was married to Mr. Samuel Butler, manager of the Harrowgate, Beverley, and Richmond Theatres, Yorkshire; and in after time was herself known upon the stage, both as manager and actress. Mr. F. C. Wemyss, when a youth of eighteen, joined Mrs. Butler's dramatic company (April 12th, 1815) at Kendal, in Westmoreland; and he records, in his "Theatrical Biography," that he there was introduced by the lady to Mr. George Jefferson, her brother, who was stage manager. This branch of the Jefferson family, however, has contributed nothing of permanent importance to the stage. A passing reference,

though, should be made to the professional career of Mr. Samuel Butler, son of the Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Butler above mentioned, grandson of Jefferson the First, and nephew of Jefferson the Second. This actor appeared at the Bowery Theatre, New York, on December 14th, 1831, as Coriolanus, and subsequently he played Virginius, and other parts, but he did not attract much attention. On November 4th, 1841, he came forward at the Park Theatre, as Hamlet, and on November 9th acted Walder, in "Walder, the Avenger." Ireland refers to him and says: "Handsome in person, graceful in action, and correct in elocution, he still lacked the inspiration necessary to rank him as an artist of the first class." His wife, who accompanied him, is mentioned as having surpassed him in public favor, - acting Louisa, in "The Dead Shot," and also Gil Blas. Mr. and Mrs. Butler returned to England, and both are now dead.

Jefferson the First had a long career. He was on the stage from about 1746 to almost the day of his death, in 1807, — a period of sixty years. At first a rover, he saw many parts of the kingdom, and became a favorite in the theatrical circles of many communities. He then settled, as the reader has seen, into the steady groove of theatrical management, and there remained till the last. His most prosperous days were those that he passed at Plymouth, where it is singular to consider he was established quite by chance. He had been asked to come there as manager of the Plymouth Theatre, for a salary and one-third of the profits, and he agreed to come, on condition that the interior of the theatre should be renovated. This was promised, and he there-

upon sent forward carpenters and painters, from the theatre at Dublin, where he happened to be acting, to do this work. Before these artisans reached Plymouth the owner of the theatre, a Mr. Kerby, had died; nevertheless they were permitted by his representative to proceed in their task. Jefferson soon followed with his theatrical company, but on arriving was much astonished to learn that all the building materials used by his mechanics had been supplied on the credit of his own name, which was well known and highly respected, and that he now already owed £261 to the tradespeople of the town. The heir-at-law refused to assume this debt, or undertake any responsibility in the matter; and, thus hampered, Jefferson determined to secure a lease of the theatre, - buying its scenery and wardrobe, - and to make Plymouth his permanent residence. This project was fulfilled. He remained the sole proprietor till 1770, when he sold one-third interest to the Mr. Foote, of Exeter, with whom, in the meantime, he had been associated in the ownership of the theatre at that town, and another third to a Mr. Wolfe, of Pynn. This partnership lasted till 1784, when, upon the death of Foote, Jefferson inherited half his share, and Wolfe the other half, in trust. Three years later, in the winter of 1787, John Bernard\*

<sup>\*</sup> JOHN BERNARD. — This actor, famous in his day for the perfection of his dry humor and finished manners, and equally excellent in the lines of acting typified by *Lord Ogleby* and *Dashwould*, was born at Portsmouth, England, in 1756. He went on the stage in 1774 and left it in 1820. After a time of provincial tribulation, he succeeded in winning a good rank on the London stage, and was long a favorite at Covent Garden. Wignell engaged him to come to Philadelphia in 1797, and he

purchased from Jefferson a third interest in the Plymouth Theatre, for £400, and thereafter Jefferson, Bernard, and Wolfe were partners in its management, till the season of 1795-96, when Bernard sold his share, (apparently to another Mr. Foote,) and emigrated to America. Jefferson, a great sufferer from gout, was now become very infirm, - so that he had to be helped in and out from house to theatre, - and he did not long retain his Plymouth property, after Bernard's departure, but sold it for the consideration of an annual benefit, clear of expenses, as long as he should live. This contract was fulfilled, and the veteran received a testimonial each year till his death.\* He derived support, also, as an annuitant from "The Covent Garden Theatrical Fund," of which he had long been a member. His last days, notwithstanding illness and trouble, were marked by resignation and cheerfulness. He was an entertaining companion, and always in good

was there connected with the Chestnut Street Theatre until 1803, when he removed to Boston, where he remained three years. In 1807 he appeared at the New York Park, and he was last seen in New York in 1813 at the Commonwealth Theatre, corner of Broadway and White street. He ultimately returned to England, and died in London, November 29th, 1828, aged seventy-two. His "Retrospections of the Stage," edited by his son William Bayle Bernard, is a charming book, and indeed one of the best contributions that have ever been made to the history of the English stage. He left papers, also, from which his son compiled and edited "Early Days of the American Stage," published in Tallis's "Dramatic Magazine" (December 1850, et seq.). Bayle Bernard died in London, August 9th, 1875. He was the author of many plays, notably of two versions of "Rip Van Winkle." — W. W.

\* "JEFFERSON'S benefit (at Plymouth) is always well and fashionably attended, and we are happy to add the last two years have been particularly lucrative." — Gilliland's Dramatic Mirror.

spirits. His last appearance on the stage was made in Aaron Hill's tragedy of "Zara," as the aged, dying monarch, Lusignan, a character whom he represented. seated in a chair. Wood mentions this incident, in his "Personal Recollections," and refers to an acquaintance of his, who was present on this night and witnessed the ceremony of Jefferson's final retirement. The tragedy of "Zara," produced at Drury Lane in 1736, was borrowed from Voltaire's "Zaire." At the time of his death, which speedily followed his farewell, Jefferson was at Ripon, on a visit to the home of his daughter Frances (Mrs. Butler), and it was there that he was seen by Mr. Drinkwater Meadows. His residence in Plymouth was a house adjoining the theatre, and a view of these premises, taken from James Winston's "Theatric Tourist," is one of the illustrations of this biography. Winston directs attention to the comedian's bedroom window, which, he says, is an object in this print. It was in this theatre that the first Mrs. Jefferson died, and it was in this house, no doubt, that Jefferson the Second was born, who first made the name conspicuous in American theatrical history.

In Bernard's first season with Jefferson (1787) at Plymouth, the dramatic company, he says, was "more select than numerous. Jefferson, in the old men, serious and comic, was a host. Wolfe, my other partner, was a respectable actor, and Mrs. Bernard and myself were established favorites from the metropolis. Among the corps was a Mr. Prigmore," — who afterwards came to America. The same sprightly writer describes, in a most amusing strain, the average audience with which

the actors at the Plymouth Theatre were favored: -"Sailors in general, I believe, are very fond of playhouses. This may be partly because they find their ships work-houses, and partly because the former are the readiest places of amusement they can visit when ashore. I remember, on my first trip to Plymouth, I was rather startled at observing the effect which acting took on them, as also their mode of conducting themselves during a performance. It was a common occurrence, when no officers were present, for a tar in the gallery, who observed a messmate in the pit that he wished to address, to sling himself over and descend by the pillars, treading on every stray finger and bill in his way. When his communication was over, and before an officer could seize him, up again he went like a cat, and was speedily anchored alongside of 'Bet, sweet Blossom.' The pit they called the hold; the gallery, up aloft, or the main-top landing; the boxes the cabin, and the stage the quarter-deck. Every General and gentleman they saluted as a skipper; every soldier was a jolly, or lobster; and the varieties of old and young men who were not in command they collectively designated swabs. Jefferson, being the eldest, was a Rear-Admiral, and I was a Commodore."

The merry temperament of Jefferson and the drifting kind of life that he led, in common with his comrades of the buskin, in "the good old times," are pleasingly suggested in another extract from the same book. This anecdote, as showing what manner of man old Thomas Jefferson was, seems worth "a whole history" in the way of description:—

"On arriving at Plymouth (1791) I found, to my great surprise, the company collected, but no preparations for the opening of the theatre. Wolfe and Jefferson were away, on one of their temporary schemes, and their precise point of destination I could not ascertain, till Jefferson came over from the little town of Lostwithiel, bringing with him the pleasing intelligence that the result of the speculation had placed all our scenery and wardrobe in jeopardy. I agreed to go back with him and play for his benefit, taking with me our singer, a very pleasant fellow, of the name of West.

"On crossing the ferry we bought a quantity of prawns, which we agreed to reserve for a snack at an inn, where Jefferson said there was some of the finest ale in the country. West and myself, however, could not resist our propensities towards a dozen of the prawns, which, lying at the top, happened to be the largest, in the manner of pottled strawberries, to cover a hundred small ones. Coming to a hill, West and I jumped out of the coach, leaving Jefferson to take care of the fish. We had just reached the summit when we heard a great bawling behind us, and looking round perceived the coach standing still at the foot of the ascent, and Jefferson leaning out of the window and waving his hand. Imagining some accident had happened, down we both ran, at our utmost speed, and inquired the matter. Jefferson held up the handkerchief of diminutive prawns to our view, and replied, 'I wished to know if you would n't like a few of the large ones.' There was so much pleasantry in this reproof that we could only look in each other's face, laugh, and toil up the hill again."

Ryley's "Itinerant" \* gives a couple of anecdotes of old Thomas Jefferson which here will not be misplaced: "Tom Blanchard came to play a few nights, and with him Jefferson of Exeter. During their stay we received an invitation to perform "The School for Scandal" and "An Agreeable Surprise," at Torr Abbey, on some grand public occasion which now slips my memory. Three chaises conveyed the major part of the company. Jefferson rode his own horse, and I walked, with my dogs and gun. During the journey, we thought of nothing but British hospitality and good cheer. Rich wines and fat venison were descanted upon with epicurean volubility: when, behold, we were shown into a cold, comfortless servants' hall, with a stone floor. Jefferson, who was a martyr to the gout, looked around him with disgust; and when the servant unfeelingly inquired whether we chose any dinner, he replied: 'Tell your master, friend, that after his death he had better have a bad epitaph than the players' ill report while he lives.' So saying he remounted his horse, and left us to do the play as well as we could without him." This rebuke had a good effect, for the butler soon made his appearance with an apology, and the players received courteous entertainment during their stay at Torr Abbey.

Another anecdote, told by Ryley, has been illustrated

<sup>\*</sup> SAMUEL WILLIAM RYLEY, born 1755, died 1837.—He wrote a musical farce, called "The Civilian, or Farmer Turned Footman" (1792), a comic opera on the subject of Smollett's novel of "Roderick Random" (1793), and a monologue entertainment entitled "New Brooms," which contains a number of songs. "The Itinerant, or Genuine Memoirs of an Actor," was published in 1808.—W. W.

with an etching by Cruickshank, published in "The Humorist": "The last night of Jefferson's engagement, he played *Hamlet*, for his own benefit; and Tom Blanchard, ever accommodating, agreed to double *Guildenstern* with the *Grave-Digger*. When *Hamlet* called for 'the recorders,' Blanchard, who delighted in a joke, instead of a flute brought on a bassoon used in the orchestra. Jefferson, after composing his countenance, which the sight of this instrument had considerably discomposed, went on with the scene:—

- "H. Will you play upon this pipe?
- "G. My lord, I cannot.
- "H. I pray you.
- "G. Believe me, I cannot.
- "H. I do beseech you.
- "G. Well, my lord, since you are so very pressing, I will do my best.

"Tom, who was a good musician, immediately struck up 'Lady Coventry's Minuet,' and went through the whole strain — which finished the scene; for *Hamlet* had not another word to say for himself."

Bernard speaks of Benjamin Haydon, father of the painter,\* as a resident of Plymouth, in those old days,

\* Benjamin Robert Haydon, born 1786, died 1846. — Bernard, when at Plymouth, often dined with the elder Haydon, and he relates this anecdote of the younger: "His son, the present artist of celebrity, a spirited, intelligent little fellow about ten years of age, used to listen to my songs, and laugh heartily at my jokes, whenever I dined at his father's. One evening I was playing Sharp, in "The Lying Valet," when he and my friend Benjamin were in the stage-box; and, on my repeating the words, 'I have had nothing to eat, since last Monday was a fortnight,' little Haydon exclaimed, in a tone audible to the whole house, 'What a whopper! Why, you dined at my father's house this after-

and as his friend and agent. Mr. Haydon was in the habit of meeting Jefferson and Wolfe, and consulting with them on the business of the theatre, and regularly communicating with Bernard in London.

The old theatrical chronicles are not very communicative with reference to Jefferson, and hence it is not possible to embellish this narrative with many incidents of his career or many traits of his character. His life seems to have been simple, unostentatious, industrious. and kindly; but, although he was well known, he never occupied a place of great prominence in the public eve or in the records of his time. It was a time, in theatrical annals, of varied and brilliant activity. The old story - so often told - of Garrick's sudden dethronement of the classic style of acting, makes its background. It was the time of Woffington, Weston, Foote, Macklin, Henderson, Bellamy, King, Mossop, Shuter, Woodward, Yates, Mrs. Pritchard, and Barry. Cibber, with the traditions of the age of Queen Anne, was just passing from the scene, while Quin,\* with his Roman dig-

noon.' It was on this occasion, I believe, Mr. B. R. Haydon first attracted the notice of the public."—" The Lying Valet" is a comedy by David Garrick, first produced at Goodman's Fields Theatre, in 1741, and afterwards acted at Drury Lane.—W. W.,

\* James Quin, 1693-1766. — The greatest Falstaff of the 18th century, and a man of sturdy intellect, imperious character, and superb wit. "I can only recommend a man who wants to see a character perfectly played to see Quin in Falstaff." — Foote. "His sentiments, though hid under the rough manner he had assumed, would have done honor to Cato." — George Anne Bellamy. One of his intimates was James Thomson, the poet, who wrote of him as follows, in "The Castle of Indolence," Canto I., stanza 67:—

<sup>&</sup>quot;Here whilom lagged the *Esopus* of the age: But called by fame, in soul yprickéd deep,

nity and pompous declamation, was soon to follow. Sheridan was writing his comedies, and the younger Colman was growing up to rival him. It was the time, in literature, of Cowper, Burns, Goldsmith, Gray, and Johnson. Burke was treading the stately heights of oratory, and the terrible Earl of Chatham was swaying the rod of empire. To Jefferson must have come, as mere news of the day, the whole thrilling story of Clive's exploits in India, and the strange and startling tale of Washington's audacious and successful rebellion in America. He could have heard, as an incident of the hour, of the suicide of Thomas Chatterton, in Brook Street, Holborn, and he might have seen the burial of David Garrick and of Samuel Johnson, in Westminster Abbey. The glorious death of Wolfe, on the Plains of Abraham, and the splendid historic pageant of the trial of Warren Hastings, in Westminster Hall, were among the passing occurrences of his day. Some of the greatest men of the eighteenth century witnessed his acting, upon the London and Dublin stage. It is instructive thus to ponder upon the experience of a man, of whom only such meagre and fleeting records now remain, but whose labors gave pleasure and instruction to more

A noble pride restored him to the stage,
And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap:
With double force the enlivened scene he wakes,
Yet quits not nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum. Now the heart he shakes,
And now with well-urged sense the enlightened judgment takes."

He was buried in Bath Abbey, where the visitor still reads his epitaph, written by Garrick. — W. W.

than one immortal genius of a noble age. He lived till close on the beginning of the regency of George the Fourth,\* and passed away just as the new forces of Scott, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, were making a new era in human thought.

One of the strongest impressions derived from research into this actor's history is the impression of his heedless amiability, and his quiet, droll humor. He was scrupulously honest, but he had no economy. The will of the once famous Tom Weston,† the great low comedian, who almost rivalled Garrick in Abel Drugger, and for whom Foote wrote the character of Ferry Sneak, contains this clause: "Item. I have played under the management of Mr. Jefferson, at Richmond, and received from him every politeness. I

\* The English historic period covered by this biography of the Jeffersons is as follows:—

-- W. W.

† Thomas Weston, born 1727, died 1776. — He was a son of the chief cook to George the Second. After a wild and roving youth he became an actor, and was in Garrick's company at Drury Lane, and with Foqte at the old Haymarket. His excellence was shown in such parts as Scrub, Drugger, and Jerry Sneak. He seems personally to have been a compound of Charles Surface and Dick Swiveller. He was merry, comic, improvident, charming, and too fond of the bottle for his own good. An interesting sketch of him will he found in John Galt's "Lives of the Players," Vol. 1., p. 232. — W. W.

therefore leave him all my stock of prudence, it being the only good quality I think he stands in need of." He had that fondness for a joke which, to this day, remains the delightful characteristic of his tribe. acted Bayes, at Exeter," says Tate Wilkinson, "and spoke a speech or two in the manner of old Andrew Brice (a printer of that city, and an eccentric genius). It struck the whole audience like electricity. Mr. Jefferson, who performed Fohnson, was so taken by surprise that he could not proceed for laughter." And on another page of Wilkinson's Memoirs the reader sees Jefferson, in the full tide of innocent, sportive mischief, demurely making game of the pompous and truculent Henry Mossop, — a man with no fun in his nature and no sense of humor, and therefore the obvious prey of the joker. Both were members, at this time, of the Theatre Royal, Dublin: "Jefferson, who loved a little mischief, said to Mossop one day, 'Sir, I was last night at Crow Street, where Wilkinson, in "Tragedy ala-Mode" and in Bayes, had taken very great liberties indeed,' and added that the audience were ill-natured enough to be highly entertained; on which Mossop snuffed the air, put his hand on his sword, and, turning upon his heel, replied, 'Yes, sir; but he only takes me off a little,' and made his angry departure. After which Jefferson never again renewed the subject; but was astonished, after his repeated and open threats of vengeance, he had not acted more consistently. And after the said Jefferson's telling me that circumstance, I never heard more of Mr. Mossop's sword, pistol, or anger." (Memoirs, Vol. 3, p. 193.) Mossop had previously, in an

exceedingly comic interview with Wilkinson, in the street, threatened him with personal violence. "'Sir,' said Mossop, 'you are going to play in Crow Street Theatre with Barry, sir, and, sir, I will run you through the body, sir, if you take the liberty to attempt my manner by any mimicry on the stage. You must promise me, sir, on your honor, you will not dare attempt it. If you break that promise, sir, you cannot live; and you, Mr. Wil-kin-son, must die, as you must meet me the next day, and I shall kill you, sir.' I told him it was impossible to comply with that his mandate."

A reference to Jefferson the First, which interests theatrical inquirers, as showing how near, for the second time, this name was to premature extinction, occurs in a sketch of the life of Theophilus Cibber, published in the "Biographia Dramatica." This was the profligate son of Colley Cibber, the poet-laureate, and he was drowned in 1758 (aged fifty-five) on the voyage to Ireland. It is in recording this catastrophe that the "Biographia" makes allusion to Jefferson:—

"Mr. Cibber embarked at Parkgate (together with Mr. Maddox, the celebrated wire-dancer, who had also been engaged as an auxiliary to the same theatre \*), on board-the Dublin trader, some time in the month of October; but the high winds which are frequent at that time of the year in St. George's Channel, and which are fatal to many vessels in the passage from this kingdom to Ireland, proved particularly so to this. The vessel

<sup>\*</sup> THE THEATRE ROYAL, DUELIN, managed by THOMAS SHERIDAN, who was much pressed, that year, by the opposition of the theatre in Crow Street. Indeed, it quite ruined him there. — W. W.

was driven to the coast of Scotland, where it was cast away, every soul in it (and the passengers were extremely numerous) perishing in the waves, and the ship itself so entirely lost that scarcely any vestige of it remained to indicate where it had been wrecked, excepting a box containing books and papers which were known to be Mr. Cibber's, and which were cast up on the western coast of Scotland. [So said Mr. Baker,\* but this was a mistake; for we have since found that in this ship in which Theoph. Cibber, Maddox, and others perished, Mr. AND Mrs. Jefferson, Mr. Arthur and family, Mrs. Chambers, and some others were passengers, and, by leaping into a small boat, were saved."]

A peculiarity in Thomas Jefferson's character, and a singular incident in his experience, are thus stated by his grand-daughter, Elizabeth Jefferson, in a letter to the present biographer of her family: "My grandfather had a great aversion to litigation and lawyers. I remember having been told of an instance of this. He had paid a large sum of money to a creditor, but had mislaid the receipt; and it happened that in time this same bill was again presented for payment. He explained and protested, but his creditor was positive, and finally my grandfather was sent to jail. My father voluntarily went there, along with him to take care of

<sup>\*</sup> DAVID ERSKINE BAKER, who projected and began the Biographia, bringing the record to 1764. ISAAC REED, F. A. S., subsequently continued this useful chronicle to 1782, and STEPHEN JONES brought it onward to 1811. The writer who shall extend it to the present day will render a great service. — W. W.

him, and for a whole year they endured imprisonment. At last the missing receipt was found, and their prison doors were opened. My grandfather was now urged to bring an action for damages, and, doubtless, he might have recovered a large sum; but his invincible repugnance to litigation restrained him, and he resolutely refused to proceed, being content with his liberty and with the contrite apology offered by his hard creditor. My father's devotion to him was never forgotten; nor—by his step-mother—ever forgiven."

Jefferson the First died at Ripon, January 24, 1807. The contemporary records of the event are meagre, and they offer a strong contrast to the kind of chronicle which now-a-days is made of the death of a distinguished man. The Gentleman's Magazine for March, 1807, presents, for example, the subjoined obituary notice: "Died. - At Ripon, County of York, while on a visit to a daughter, Mr. Jefferson, comedian, - the friend, contemporary, and exact prototype of the immortal Garrick. He had resided many years at Plymouth; and as often as his age and infirmities permitted he appeared on that stage in characters adapted to lameness and decay, and performed them admirably, particularly at his last benefit, when he personated Lusignan and Lord Chalkstone. We know not whether Mr. Hull or Mr. Jefferson was the father of the British stage; they were both of nearly an equal standing. To the Theatrical Fund,\* of which the former is founder

<sup>\*</sup> THE THEATRICAL FUND of London was instituted at Covent Garden Theatre, December 22d, 1765, and confirmed by act of Parliament in 1766. It still exists. The idea of it was suggested by Mr. George Mat-

and treasurer, the latter owed the chief support of his old age." A passing reference to the same bereavement is made as follows in the "Annual Register" for 1807: "Mr. Jefferson was on a visit to a daughter, who is settled in Yorkshire, when death closed the last scenes of this honest, pleasant, much esteemed man."

This chapter of notices of the life of Thomas Jefferson cannot better be concluded than with these suggestive reflections made by Mr. James Smith, of Melbourne, a diligent and appreciative student of theatrical history, and one of the most sprightly and ingenious writers of the Australian world. "What times to have lived in," this moralist exclaims, "and what men and women to have known! He saw Old Drury in the height of its glory, and Garrick in the zenith of his renown. He flirted with Kitty Clive, and supped with Fanny Abington.

tocks; the plan was carried into practical effect by Thomas Hull. In the churchyard of St. Margaret's, a few yards from the north porch of Westminster Abbey, may be read on a gravestone this inscription, — the lines by John Taylor:—

Also to the Memory of
THOMAS HULL, Esq.,
Late of the.
Theatre Royal, Covent Garden,
who departed this life
April 22d, 1808,
In the 79th year of his age.

Hull, long respected in the scenic art,
On this world's stage sustained a virtuous part;
And some memorial of his zeal to shew
For his loved Art, and shelter age from woe,
Founded that noble Fund which guards his name,
Embalmed by Gratitude, enshrined by Fame.

— W. W.

He listened to the silver tones of Spranger Barry, and was melted by the pathos of Susanna Cibber. He chuckled at the sight of Sam Foote mimicking Mr. Aprice, and of Tate Wilkinson mimicking Sam Foote. He saw the curtain rise before an audience that included Lord Chancellor Camden and Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, William Hogarth and Charles Churchill, Edmund Burke and Edward Gibbon. He heard Goldsmith's child-like laugh, and Dr. Johnson's gruff applause. He saw the courtly sarcasm sparkle in Horace Walpole's eyes, and the jest quivering on Selwyn's lip. He recognized the quaint figure of Sir Joshua Reynolds in the boxes, and the brilliant, homely face of Thomas Gainsborough in the pit. And, above all, he trod the same stage with the English Roscius, and was privileged to watch every movement of that marvellous face. This was, indeed, an uncommon and a happy fate! What pleasant hours he must have spent with Garrick at Hampton, and what a fund of anecdote he must have accumulated with which, in his age, to charm his cronies at Plymouth! He had seen King carry the town by storm as Lord Ogleby in 'The Clandestine Marriage,' and Garrick take his farewell of the stage. He could recall the airy flutter of Dodd, the rollicking Irish humor of Moody, the well-bred ease of Palmer, the eloquent by-play of Parsons, the versatility of Bannister, the strong, melodious voice of Holland, the ardor of Powell, the whimsical drollery of Reddish, Mossop's harmonious delivery, and Macklin's rumbling growl. He had seen the Abingtons, the Baddeleys, the Cibbers, the Clives, and the whole splendid phalanx of the Garrick dynasty, pass

from the scene; and he had lived to view the rise of the Kembles, and to hear the thrilling accents of Mrs. Siddons, and the sweet, bubbling laugh of Dora Jordan. What reminiscences might have been written by Jefferson the First!"

Note.—The character of *Lord Chalkstone* occurs in Garrick's farce of "Lethe," first produced at Drury Lane, in 1748. It had been presented three years earlier, in a different form, at Goodman's Fields Theatre, under the title of "Æsop in the Shades." Garrick himself was the original *Lord Chalkstone*.— Tate Wilkinson was born October 27th, 1739, and died December 1st, 1803.—The play-bill, of which a fac-simile appears above, bears the MS. date of 1751; but Foote, whose name occurs in it, was absent from England from 1749 to 1752. The true date, probably, is 1753.—The "Covent Garden horses," mentioned by Mrs. Abington, were a number of actual steeds, exhibited at that theatre, in 1811, in processions, in "Blue Beard" and "The Forty Thieves." Sheridan referred to them in this couplet:—

"How arts improve in this degenerate age!

Peers mount the box, and horses tread the stage!"

The cost of conducting a theatre was much less, a hundred years ago, than it is now. The salaries paid to actors were smaller. Spranger Barry and his wife received, at Drury Lane, in 1773, £50 a week—for the two. Lacy was paid £16 13s. Garrick received £34 3s. The total payment for a week amounted to £522 7s 6d. These figures are from *Notes and Queries*. Dunlap states his total expenses, at the N. Y. Park, in the season of 1798–99 at less than \$1,200 a week.—W. W.

## JEFFERSON THE SECOND.

1774-1832.

" Noble he was, contemning all things mean, His truth unquestioned and his soul serene. Shame knew him not, he dreaded no disgrace, Truth, simple truth, was written in his face; Yet, while the serious thought his soul approved, Cheerful he seemed and gentleness he loved; To bliss domestic he his heart resigned, And with the firmest had the fondest mind. Were others joyful, he looked smiling on, And gave allowance where he needed none. Good he refused with future ill to buy, Nor knew a joy that caused reflection's sigh. A friend to virtue, his unclouded breast No envy stung, no jealousy distressed; Yet far was he from stoic pride removed, -He felt humanely, and he warmly loved." - CRABBE.



## JEFFERSON THE SECOND.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON, the second of this family of actors, and one of the most honorably distinguished performers that have graced the theatre, was born at Plymouth, England, in 1774. His early education was conducted with care, and he received, under the guidance of his parents, a careful training for the stage. While yet a lad he acted in the Plymouth Theatre, - after Bernard had become associated with his father and Mr. Wolfe in its management. His youth, so far as can be judged from the little that is known of it, was commendable for patience, industry, and filial devotion. He appears to have matured early, and to have been capable of farsighted views and the steady pursuit of a definite purpose in life. He did not find his home comfortable after his father's second (or third) marriage, and also he sympathized with the republican tone of feeling, which at that disturbed period — intervening between the revolt of the British colonies in America and the great and terrible French Revolution - was, to some extent, rife in England. Thus he had two causes of discontent; and these, operating together, finally impelled him to emigrate to America. The opportunity was afforded by C. S. Powell, of Boston, who had come to England, in 1793, to enlist actors for the new thea-





Ma. JEFFERSON

in the Characters of Dr. Smugface & Dr. Dablancour in the Hudget of Hunders



January 20th, 1796; and with those players — and especially with Hodgkinson - Jefferson seems to have formed an early acquaintance and alliance. There is a dubious tradition that Hodgkinson and Hallam, before their return to New York on this occasion, gave performances at one or two intermediate towns, and that Jefferson, who had accepted employment with them as scene painter, on condition that he might have one night for a trial appearance, came out as La Gloire, in Colman's play of "The Surrender of Calais," at one of these places, and made so brilliant a hit that Hodgkinson at once engaged him for the John Street Theatre. But the historic record of his first important appearance \* in America assigns it to that theatre, in New York, on February 10th, 1796, when he came forward as Squire Richard, in "The Provoked Husband." This was the opening night of the season, and Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, Mr. and Mrs. Tyler, and Mrs. Brett all from England - were also then seen for the first time in the American capital. William Dunlap, the au-

<sup>\*</sup> Jefferson in Boston. — Reference to the advertisements in the "Columbian Centinel" (1795) elicits the information that, on December 21st that year, "Macbeth" was acted at the Federal, with "Mr. Jefferson" as one of the witches: that, on December 23d, "The Tempest" was given, with "Mr. Jefferson" in a minor character; and that on December 28th, for the benefit of M. de Blois, "Mr. Jefferson" appeared, and sang the comic song of "John Bull's a Bumpkin." Mr. W. W. Clapp, whose careful and thorough record of "The Boston Stage" is of permanent value to theatrical inquirers, apprises the writer that no particular mention of the name of Jefferson occurs in any of the papers that he consulted in making his chronicle of that time; while the only Jeffersons mentioned in his book are of the fourth generation. — W. W.

thor of the "History of the American Theatre" (to about 1812), witnessed this performance, and has left this mention of Jefferson: "He was then a youth, but even then an artist. Of a small and light figure, well formed, with a singular physiognomy, a nose perfectly Grecian, and blue eyes full of laughter, he had the faculty of exciting mirth to as great a degree, by power of feature, although handsome, as any ugly-featured low comedian ever seen. The Squire Richard of Mr. Jefferson made a strong impression on the writer. His Sadi, in 'The Mountaineers,' a stronger; and, strange to say, his Verges, in 'Much Ado About Nothing,' a yet stronger."

Among the references made to Jefferson's career in New York is the following, embodied in an anecdote told by Dunlap respecting the début of Mr. John D. Miller, the son of a baker, who came forth as *Clement*, in "The Deserted Daughter":—

"Miller's début is fresh in our recollection, as connected with the admirable acting of Jefferson, in the character of *Item*, the attorney, whose clerk Miller represented. Worked up to a phrensy of feigned passion, Jefferson, a small-sized man, seized Miller by the breast, and, while uttering the language of rage, shook him violently. Miller, not aware that he was to be treated so roughly, was at first astonished; but as Jefferson continued shaking, and the audience laughing, the young baker's blood boiled, and calling on his physical energies, he seized the comedian with an Herculean grasp, and violently threw him off. Certainly Miller never played with so much spirit or nature on any subsequent

occasion. This may remind the reader of John Kemble's regret at the death of Suett, the low comedian, who played *Weasel*, to Kemble's *Penruddock* (in 'The Wheel of Fortune;" comedy, by Richard Cumberland; Drury Lane, 1795.) The lament of the tragedian is characteristic, as told by Kelly: 'My dear Mic, *Penruddock* has lost a powerful ally in Suett. Sir, I have acted the part with many *Weasels*, and good ones too, but none of them could work up my passions to the pitch Suett did. He had a comic, impertinent way of thrusting his head into my face, which called forth all my irritable sensations. The effect upon me was irresistible.' Such was the effect of Jefferson's shaking upon Miller, and Jefferson found the Yankee's arm equally irresistible.'

The old John Street Theatre — first opened on December 7th, 1767, and finally closed January 13th, 1798 — was the precursor of the old Park. Jefferson remained connected with it for nearly two years, and when it closed he transferred his services to "The New Theatre," as the Park was at first styled, which was opened on January 29th, 1798, under Dunlap's management. He received a salary of \$23 a week, which, in the next season, was increased to \$25. Hallam and Cooper, in the same company, received \$25 each. The highest salary paid in Dunlap's list was \$37, to Mrs. Oldmixon. The manager's main-stay in tragedy was Cooper, and in low comedy was Jefferson.

On his first arrival in New York, Jefferson had found a lodging in the home of Mrs. Fortune, in John Street, adjoining the theatre. This lady, whose ashes, together

with those of her husband, now rest in the churchyard of old St. Paul's, at the corner of Broadway and Vesey Street, was the widow of a Scotch merchant, and she had two daughters, who were residing with her at this time. One of these girls, Euphemia, soon became the wife of Jefferson. The other, Esther, some years later, married William Warren — being his second wife and in this way the families of Jefferson and Warren, both so highly distinguished on our stage, were allied. Warren,\* born at Bath, England, in 1767, had acted under the management of Jefferson the First, and now, arriving in America in 1796, he was destined to become, ten years later, the brother-in-law of Jefferson the Second. His son, William Warren, born of this marriage (in 1812), is the admirable comedian so long a favorite and so much honored and beloved in Boston. Mrs. Jefferson made her first appearance on the stage, December

\* WILLIAM WARREN, after the wreck of his fortunes at the Chestnut Street Theatre, rapidly declined in strength and spirits, and soon died. His death occurred at Baltimore, on October 19th, 1832. His age was sixty-five. Five of his children became members of the stage: I. HESTER, first Mrs. Willis, afterwards Mrs. Proctor, died in Boston, Mass., in 1842. II. Anna, who became the wife of the celebrated comedian, Danford Marble, and died in Cincinnati, March 11th, 1872. III. EMMA, first Mrs. Price, afterwards Mrs. Hanchett; died in New York, in May, 1879. IV. MARY ANN, who married John B. Rice, afterward mayor of Chicago, and always throughout his life, one of the best and most honored and beloved of men. She retired from the stage in 1856, and is still living in Chicago, a widow. V. WILLIAM WARREN, of Boston, the renowned comedian. He was born at Philadelphia, November 17th, 1812; early adopted the stage, and rapidly rose to eminence; made his first appearance in Boston, October 5th, 1846, at the Howard Athenaum, acting Sir Lucius O' Trigger, in "The Rivals," and ever since has been closely identified with the Boston stage. distant be the day that takes him from us ! - W. W.

22d, 1800, at the Park, as *Louisa Dudley*, in "The West Indian." She was then twenty-four years old. She subsequently removed, with her husband, to Philadelphia, where she was long an ornament to the stage and society. She died in January, 1831, at the age of fifty-six.

Jefferson's career at the Park Theatre extended through five regular seasons, ending in the spring of 1803. Its current can be traced, by the patient inquirer, in the useful, reminiscent pages of Dunlap. One of Jefferson's first hits was made as *Peter*, in "The S'ranger," which was performed for the first time in America in December, 1798, at the Park. Dunlap had got possession of a sketch of the plot, together with a portion of the dialogue of Kotzebue's play, then successful in London, as rearranged by Sheridan for Drury Lane, and he promptly wrote a piece upon the basis of these materials, telling no one but Cooper his secret, and this was produced anonymously, with the following cast:—

The Stranger .		٠		Mr. Cooper.
Francis				
Baron Steinfort				
Solomon				
				Mr. Jefferson.
Mrs. Haller				
Chambermaid .				
Baroness Steinfo				

Cooper, it appears, produced a great effect; Mrs. Barrett was powerful and touching; Martin was correct; and Bates and Jefferson pleased the lovers of

farce,—"for such the comic portion of the play literally was." "The Stranger" insured the success of the entire season, and the manager was so much pleased that he immediately studied and learned the German language, and thereupon opened upon the Park stage a perfect sluice of the sentimental rubbish of Kotzebue. The actors sneered at it as "wretched Dutch stuff," and well they might; yet, for a time, it was almost as epidemic as the yellow-fever, which in those days devastated, at intervals, the whole Atlantic coast.

Many other bad low-comedy parts and old men fell to Jefferson during his five years at the Park. played them all, however, in the most conscientious and thorough manner. As La Fleur, in Dunlap's opera of "Sterne's Maria," a singing part, he acquitted himself with especial brilliancy. Mrs. Oldmixon, Miss Westray, Mrs. Seymour, Cooper, Tyler, young Hallam, and Hogg were in the cast. The ladies were all singers, but only Jefferson and Tyler among the males could sing. Another of his admirable delineations was that of Fack Bowline, the rough old Boatswain, in an adaptation from Kotzebue, with the engaging title of "Fraternal Discord." Hodgkinson, who had joined the Park company in the autumn of 1799, enacted Captain Bertram, a gouty mariner, in this work, and was accounted wonderfully fine in it. The two comedians seem to have been well matched, but Hodgkinson was the better of the two. "Jefferson's excellence," writes Dunlap, "was great, but not to be put in competition with Hodgkinson's, even in low comedy."

JOHN HODGKINSON, thus extolled, seems indeed, to

have been the prince of all actors in that period. He was born at Manchester, England, in 1767, being the son of an inn-keeper named Meadowcraft. In youth he was bound an apprentice to a trade, but he ran away from home, adopted the name of Hodgkinson, and went on the stage, and his prodigious talents soon raised him to a position of importance. He was early joined to Mrs. Munden, whom it is said he had alienated from the famous comedian (Joseph Shepherd Munden, 1758-1832), and subsequently to Miss Brett, of the Bath Theatre, whom, however, he did not wed till after they both had come to America. That was in September, 1792 - Hallam's partner, Henry, having found them at the Bath Theatre, and engaged them for this country. Hodgkinson's first American appearance was made in Philadelphia, as Belcour, in "The West Indian," and on January 28th, 1793, he came out at the John Street Theatre, New York, as Vapid, in "The Dramatist," — that comedy, by Frederic Reynolds, first acted in 1789 at Covent Garden, which has been characterized as the precursor of "the numerous family by which genteel and sprightly comedians have been converted into speaking harlequins." He was one of the managers of the John Street Theatre, from 1794 to 1798, and he acted in the principal cities all along the Atlantic seaboard from Boston to Charleston, and was everywhere a favorite. He died very suddenly of yellow-fever, in the neighborhood of Washington, September 12th, 1805, aged thirty-eight years. Hodgkinson's life was sullied by many wrong actions. He was a libertine, and he lacked probity of character. His last

hours were very wretched. "He was in continual agitation," we are told, "from pain and excessive terror of death, and presented the most horrid spectacle that the mind can imagine. He was, as soon as dead, wrapped in a blanket and carried to the burying-field by negroes." So, prematurely and miserably, a great light was put out.

Bernard, in his "Early Days of the American Stage," pays this tribute to the memory of this great actor: "When I associate Hodgkinson with Garrick and Henderson (the first of whom I had often seen, and the latter had played with), I afford some ground for thinking he possessed no common claims. . . Hodgkinson was a wonder. In the whole range of the living drama there was no variety of character he could not perceive and embody, from a Richard or a Hamlet down to a Shelty or a Sharp. To the abundant mind of Shakespeare his own turned as a moon that could catch and reflect a large amount of its radiance; and if, like his great precursors, it seemed to have less of the poetic element than of the riches of humor, this was owing to association, which, in the midst of his tragic passions, would intrude other images. An exclusive tragedian will always seem greater by virtue of his specialty, by the singleness of impressions which are simply poetie. Hodgkinson had one gift that enlarged his variety beyond all competition; he was also a singer, and could charm you in a burletta after thrilling you in a play: so that through every form of the drama he was qualified to pass, and it might be said he 'exhausted worlds,' if he could not 'invent

new.' I doubt if such a number and such greatness of requisites were ever before united in one mortal man. Nor were his physical powers inferior to his mental; he was tall and well-proportioned, though inclining to be corpulent, with a face of great mobility, that showed the minutest change of feeling, whilst his voice, full and flexible, could only be likened to an instrument that his passions played upon at pleasure."

JEFFERSON is also encountered at this time as Kudrin in "Count Benyowski," the Fool in "The Italian Father." Fohn in "False Shame," and Michelli in Holcroft's "Tale of Mystery." In the summer seasons of 1800 and 1801, while the Park Theatre remained closed, Jefferson and his wife acted at Joseph Corré's "Mount Vernon Gardens," situated on the spot which is now the north-west corner of Leonard Street and Broadway. That theatre was opened July 9th, 1800, with "Miss in Her Teens, or the Medley of Lovers," and Jefferson acted Captain Flash. In the regular seasons at the Park, which rarely opened before the middle of October, Jefferson's professional associates were Mr. and Mrs. Hodgkinson, Mr. and Mrs. Hallam, Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, Mr. and Mrs. Powell, Mr. and Mrs. Harper, Mr. Tyler, Mr. Fox, Mr. Martin, Mr. Hallam, Jr., Mr. Crosby, Mrs. Melmoth, Mrs. and Miss Brett. Miss Harding, and Miss Hogg. Here, and afterwards at the Chestnut, he held his rank with the best of his competitors; and, in looking back to those days of the stage, it should be remembered that at some seasons it would happen that every actor in the company was a classical scholar.

Jefferson's conspicuous hits, even at this early age, appear to have been made in old men; and an anecdote, which he himself related, attests his success. A sympathetic but mistaken old lady called one day at the John Street Theatre with a subscription list, to entreat the managers "to withdraw that poor old Mr. Jefferson from the stage." She said she had been to see him play in "The Steward," \* - as she had been told it was a wonderful performance, - and it had struck her that it would be only a Christian charity to remove so aged an actor from public life, and to provide for him. She had headed her list with a liberal gift, and she was now on her way to get additional subscribers, in order to provide a quiet and respectable home for the infirm actor. Cooper, who was then connected with the theatre, and who chanced to be present, told her, in reply, that such a scheme had long been in contemplation, and that the manager would gladly co-operate with her in any charitable effort to ameliorate the hardships of the aged Jefferson's condition. She was delighted. Just then Jefferson entered the room, and Cooper straightway introduced him to the lady, styling her his "kind friend and protector, who had so charitably undertaken to find him a home." Her amazement at seeing a slender, handsome young fellow of six-andtwenty, instead of a senile mummy, was excessive. She stammered out a word of explanation, and tore her sub-

<sup>\*</sup> An alteration of "The Deserted Daughter." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1795. Jefferson acted *Grime* as well as *Item* in this piece, — of course, on different nights. — W. W.

scription paper in pieces; and the scene ended in a general laugh.

The year 1803 brought the turning-point in Jefferson's life. Theatrical enterprise at this time was about equally divided between Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. The Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia (which city had just ceased (1800) to be the capital of the Republic), held the lead. The Park Theatre in New York, under Dunlap's management, was second, and the Federal Street Theatre in Boston — rebuilt after the conflagration of 1798, and now managed by Snelling Powell, brother of C. S. Powell — was, for the first time, becoming a successful institution. On the New York stage, Jefferson must have found himself almost as much overshadowed by Hodgkinson, who came and went like a comet, as his father had been, on the London stage, by Garrick. The opportunity of transition into a new field of labor now came to him, and, apparently; came at just the right time. Mrs. Wignell, left a widow by the sudden and untimely death of the great manager, was obliged, in the spring of 1803, to assume the direction of the Chestnut Street Theatre, and a proposal was immediately made to Jefferson to join the company there, taking the place of John Bernard, who had repaired to Boston. At first he hesitated, being reluctant to leave a community where he had been much admired, and where he possessed many friends; and also, perhaps, - for he was a man of extreme modesty, - apprehensive of being compared, to some disadvantage, with his accomplished predecessor. In the end, though, he accepted the Philadelphia engagement.

for his wife as well as himself; and, after a summer season of about two months passed at Albany,\* he finally quitted the New York stage. He was seen at the old Park, though, as a visitor, in the spring of 1806, when he acted, with splendid ability, the favorite characters of Jacob Gawky, Jeremy Diddler, Bobby Pendragon, Doctor Lenitive, Toby Allspice, and Ralph; and he came again in 1824, when on August 5th, at the Chatham Garden Theatre, he took his farewell of the metropolis, acting Sir Benjamin Dove, in "The Brothers," and Sancho, in "Lover's Quarrels." The story of the rest of his life, however, after the year 1803, is the story of his association with the Chestnut Street Theatre.

Mrs. Wignell, it should be said in passing, was the famous actress first known in London as Anne Brunton. This beautiful and brilliant woman, born at Bristol, England, in 1770, had made a splendid hit at Covent Garden before she was sixteen years old, and she was accounted the greatest tragic genius among women, since Mrs. Siddons. In 1792 she became the wife of Robert Merry, author of the "Della Crusca" verse, to which Mrs. Hannah Cowley, as "Anna Matilda," had replied in congenial fustian, and which was excoriated by William Gifford in his satires of "The Baviad" and

<sup>\*</sup> Jefferson in Albany. — Mr. H. P. Phelps, in his compendious and useful record of the Albany stage, entitled "Players of a Century," notes that Jefferson was with Dunlap's company from the New York Park Theatre, which acted in that city in the Thespian Hotel in 1803, the season lasting from August 22d till October 27th. He reappeared in Albany June 9th, 1829, acting Dr. Ollapod and Dicky Gossip; but this was in his decadence. — W. W.

"Mæviad." Mr. and Mrs. Merry came to America in 1796, the lady being then in her twenty-seventh year, and under engagement to Wignell for the Philadelphia theatre. It is mentioned that the ship in which they sailed made the voyage to New York in twenty-one days. Wignell himself was a passenger by her, and so was the comedian Warren, whom also he had engaged. All these persons, surely, would have been amazed could they have foreseen the incidents of a not very remote future. Merry died in 1798 at Baltimore, and in 1803 his widow married Wignell. He in turn died suddenly, seven weeks after their marriage, and on August 15th, 1806, the enterprising widow married Warren. comical to think of a lady as having actually imported three husbands at once. Mrs. Merry-Wignell-Warren had a bright career on the American stage, and was greatly admired and esteemed. Her death occurred at Alexandria, Va., June 28th, 1808, and her tomb is a conspicuous object in the old Episcopal churchyard of that place. The sister of this lady, Louisa Brunton, was seen on the London stage in 1785 as Fuliet, and she became the Countess of Craven.

When Jefferson had joined the Chestnut Street Theatre the dramatic company was the strongest in America, and one of the best ever formed. Warren and Reinagle were directors, — the former of affairs in general, the latter of the department of music. William B. Wood, who had been to England for recruits, was the actual stage-manager. The company comprised, all told, Warren, Downie, Jefferson, William Francis, William Twaits, Francis Blissett, W. B. Wood, Cain,

Owen Morris, Warrell, Durang, Mestayer, Melbourne, Fox, Hardinge, L'Estrange, Usher, Mrs. Wignell, Mrs. Oldmixon, Mrs. Shaw, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. Wood (late Miss Juliana Westray), Mrs. Solomon, Mrs. Snowden, Mrs. Durang, Mrs. Downie, Mrs. Morris, and Miss Hunt. The union of powers thus indicated for comedy acting was marvellous. The weight, dignity, and rich humor with which Warren could invest such characters as Old Dornton and Sir Robert Bramble made him easily supreme in this line. He held the leadership, also, in the line of Falstaff and Sir Toby Belch. Blissett's fastidious taste, neat execution, and beautiful polish, made him perfection in parts of the Dr. Caius and Bagatelle order, which he presented as delicate miniatures. Francis was finely adapted for such boisterous old men as Sir Sampson Legend and Sir Anthony Absolute. Jefferson — conscientious and thorough, and at the same time brilliant - ranged from Mercutio to Dominie Sampson, from Touchstone to Dogberry, and from Farmer Ashfield to Maw worm, and was a consummate artist in all. Wood was the Doricourt and Don Felix. And Twaits, a wonderful young man, brimful of genius, seemed formed by nature for all such characters as range with Dr. Pangloss, Lingo, Tony Lumpkin, or Goldfinch.

Dunlap justly observes that Twaits was an admirable opposite to Jefferson, and his description of this prodigy sharpens the point of his apt remark: "Short and thin, yet appearing broad; muscular, yet meagre; a large head, with stiff, stubborn, carroty hair; long, colorless face; prominent hooked nose; projecting, large,

hazel eyes; thin lips; and a large mouth which could be twisted into a variety of expression, and which, combining with his other features, eminently served the purpose of the comic muse, — such was the physiognomy of William Twaits."

This actor, born April 25th, 1781, a native of Birmingham, England, died in New York, August 22d, 1814, of consumption, precipitated by his convivial habits. Twaits married Mrs. Villiers, formerly Miss Eliza Westray, and he was the manager of the Richmond Theatre at the time of the fatal conflagration which destroyed it, — and with it so many lives. — December 26th, 1811. The mother of Jefferson the Fourth, who had received instruction from him, and often acted with him, was accustomed to speak with enthusiasm of his brilliant mental qualities and the fine texture of his dramatic art. A three-quarter length painting of Twaits as *Dr. Pangloss* long existed among the possessions of the Jefferson family, but ultimately disappeared.

Prominent among the accessible sources of information respecting the life of Jefferson after he settled in Philadelphia are William B. Wood's "Personal Recollections of the Stage," and Francis Courtney Wemyss's "Theatrical Biography." The former volume, published in 1855, in its author's seventy-sixth year, covers, discursively, the period from 1797 to 1846, in Philadelphia theatrical history; the latter, published in 1848, in its author's fifty-first year, traverses, in part, the same general ground, from 1822 to 1841, though, altogether, it is Wemyss's Autobiography, beginning in

1797 and ending in 1846. These writers were associated for several years. Wood, who had long been employed in Wignell's company, became stage-manager of the Chestnut in 1806, and a partner with Warren in the management in 1809. Wemyss was engaged for the Chestnut company by Wood in 1822, and after Wood had retired he became the stage-manager under Warren (1827). To both of them, accordingly, the affairs of the theatre were well known. They were not harmonious spirits, as their respective memoirs abundantly show; but they concur perfectly, with reference to Jefferson, in admiration for his character as a man, and for his great abilities as an actor.

Jefferson's first appearance under Mrs. Wignell's management was made as *Don Manuel*, in Cibber's comedy of "She Would and She Would Not." He was seen at Baltimore \* as well as at Philadelphia, "at once establishing," says Wood, "a reputation which neither time nor age could impair." The references to him, in Wood and in Wemyss, are numerous, but are mostly unemphatic, the only notable quality about them being their manner, which always implies a distinct sense of the solidity and high worth of his repu-

<sup>\*</sup> The managers of the Chestnut had a theatrical circuit which included Baltimore and Washington, and they were accustomed to make regular, periodical visits to those cities. Cowell makes one of his characteristic jibes, in referring to this fact: "Baltimore had for years been visited by Warren and Wood with the same jog-trot company and the same old pieces, till they had actually taught the audience to stay away." — Cowell's Thirty Years. The allusion, of course, is to a later period. With reference to Cowell, see ante, p. 8, and post, pp. 101-145.—W. W.

tation. During the season of 1808 he was seen no less than ten different times in Sir Oliver Surface, Charles Surface, and Crabtree. His personation of Sir Peter Teazle was also highly approved, but it appears to have been accounted inferior to that of Warren - probably because it excelled in elegant quaintness and in sentiment rather than in the more appreciable quality of uxorious excess or of rubicund humor. In 1810-11 the performance for his annual benefit yielded \$1,403; in 1814, \$1,221 (at Baltimore); in 1815, \$1,618; in 1816, \$1,009; in 1822, \$697. "The starring system," Wood says, "now began to show its baleful effects on the actors, whose benefits, after a season of extreme labor, uniformly failed." In the season of 1815-16, "The Ethiop" and "Zembuca" were among the pieces presented at the Chestnut, and Wood records that "much of their success was owing to the taste and skill of Jefferson in the construction of intricate stage machinery, of which on many occasions he proved himself a perfect master, not unfrequently improving materially the English models. These valuable services were wholly gratuitous, all remuneration being uniformly declined. He felt himself amply repaid for the exercise of his varied talent by the prosperity of the establishment of which for twenty-five years he continued the pride and ornament. . . . 'The Woodman's Hut,' with an effective conflagration scene designed by Jefferson, produced several houses of \$700 each."

One of the Chestnut casts of "The School For Scandal" (1822) is illustrative of the opulence of its dramatic resources:—

Sir Peter Teazle				•		Warren.
Sir Oliver Surface	е					Francis.
Charles Surface						Wood.
Joseph Surface						H. Wallack.
Sir Benjamin Bac	kb	ite				Johnson.
Crabtree						
Rowley						
Moses						T. Burke.
Careless						Darley.
Trip						JOHN JEFFERSON.
Snake						Greene.
Lady Teazle .						Mrs. Wood
Lady Sneerwell						Mrs. Lafolle.
Mrs. Candour .						Mrs. Francis.
Maria						Mrs. H. Wallack.
Maid						Mrs. Greene.

This is given according to Wood's record. That of Wemyss, however, also gives it, assigning *Sir Benjamin Backbite* to Thomas Jefferson.

Sol Smith, in his "Theatrical Management in the West and South for Thirty Years," mentions one of the memorable Chestnut casts, which he saw there on the occasion of a visit to Philadelphia in 1823. "I witnessed that night," he says "the performance of 'The Fortress,' and 'A Roland for an Oliver.' The afterpiece was a rich treat to me. How could it be otherwise, with such a cast as the following:—

Sir Mark Chase					Warren.
Fixture					JEFFERSON.
Alfred Highflyer					Wemyss.
Selbourne					Darley.
Maria					Mrs. Darley.
Mrs. Selbourne					Mrs. Wood.
Mrs. Fixture .					Mrs. Jefferson."

"The Fortress" referred to is a musical drama by Theodore Edward Hook, first acted at the Haymarket, London, in 1807.

A minute account, year by year, of Jefferson's professional toils at the Chestnut Street Theatre cannot be attempted in this place; nor is there room here for a detailed description of his associates, and of the rise and fall of their theatrical reputations, under the influence of a changing public taste and of the stress of lapsing time. Ample materials, however, exist in Warren's manuscript journals and elsewhere for a particular history of this period and of its dramatic luminaries. The purpose of the present memoir is sufficiently fulfilled in a general indication of the field and the character of Jefferson's artistic life.

The venerable actor and manager, Mr. N. M. Ludlow, who published his reminiscences in 1880, under the title of "Dramatic Life as I Found it," glances at the character of Jefferson's acting, in the following passage: "While in Philadelphia (in 1826), I had the pleasure of beholding a performance of 'Old Jefferson,' as he was then called. . . . I had seen him in New York when I was a youth of seventeen, early in the year 1812, when Wood and Jefferson came to New York to perform, while Cooper and others went from New York to Philadelphia for a like purpose. I was delighted with Jefferson when I saw him then, as a boy. I was not less so when I now beheld him with professional eyes and some experience. The comedy that I saw played in Philadelphia was by Frederic Pillon, and entitled 'He Would be a Soldier,' with the following cast of characters: Sir Oliver Oldstock, Warren; Captain Crevett, George Barrett; for many years well known as a genteel comedian; Caleb, Jefferson; Charlotte, the beautiful Mrs. Barrett. All are now dead. In Jefferson's acting there was a perfection of delineation I have seldom, if ever, seen in any other comedian of his line of character; not the least attempt at exaggeration to obtain applause, but a naturalness and truthfulness that secured it, without the appearance of any extraordinary efforts from him. The nearest approach to his style is that of his grandson, of the same name."

Upon the state of the stage in America, sixty years ago, — viewing it, of course, as an institution existing broadcast and only prosperous at special places, and, at the same time, making allowance for the mental eccentricity of the writer, — much useful light is thrown by a letter which was addressed by J. B. Booth, the tragedian, to the comic actor, George Holland, in 1826. A copy of this manuscript was given by Holland to the present biographer, in 1870, and was first published in July of that year. It is now reproduced: —

NEW YORK, Xmas Eve, 1826.

but direct y'r letter to the Theatre Baltimore U States.

My Dear Sir: Messrs. Wallack and Freeman, a few days since, shewed me your letter, with the inclosure sent last winter to you at Sheffield.

It is requisite that I inform you Theatricals are not in so flourishing a condition in this Country as they were some two years ago. There are four Theatres in this City each endeavoring to ruin the others, by foul means as well as fair. The reduction of the prices of admission has proved (as I always anticipated from the first suggestion of such a foolish plan)

nearly ruinous to the Managers. The Publick here often witness a Performance in every respect equal to what is presented at the Theatres Royal D. L. and C. G. for these prices. Half a Dollar to the Boxes and a quarter do. to the Pit and Gallery!

The Chatham Theatre of which I ain the Stage-Manager, at these low prices [holds] one thousand Dollars.—Acting is sold too cheap to the Publick and the result will be a general theatrical bankruptcy.

Tragedians are in abundance — Macready — Conway — Hamblin — Forrest (now No. 1) Cooper, Wallack — Maywood and self with divers others now invest New-York. But it won't do; a diversion to the south must be made — or to Jail three-fourths of the Great men and Managers must go.

Now Sir, I will deal fairly with you. If you will pledge yourself to me for three years, and sacredly promise that no inducement which may be held out by the unprincipled and daring speculators which abound in this country shall cause you to leave me, I will, for ten months in each year, give you thirty dollars per week, and an annual benefit which you shall divide with me. Beyond this sum I would not venture, the privilege of your name for Benefits Extra to be allowed me—and I should expect the terms on which you would be engaged to remain secret from all but ourselves.

Mind this — whether you play in my Theatres or elsewhere in the U States, I should look for implicit and faithful performances of your duty toward me or my colleagues! In case I should require you to travel, when in the United States, which is most probable, I will defray all the charges of conveyance for you and your luggage — your living would not be included either by land or water — Boarding (three meals a day,) and your Bed room, may be had in very respectable houses here & in Baltimore at from four to six dollars per week — "Lodgings to let" are very scarce and expensive, and the customs of this country, in this respect, are essentially different to those of the English.

The M. S. and music of Paul Pry, with Faustus's music Do.

and Book of the Pilot, the M. S. and Do. of a piece played some few years back at Sadlers Wells, call'd "the Gheber or the Fire Worshippers," two or three of Liston's new pieces I should advise you to bring. And particularly the *Gheber*, for me. The Mogul Tale here is out of print.

In the Exeter Theatre last January were two actresses that I should like to engage. Miss P—— (not the Miss P. formerly of Drury Lane) and Miss H. If you will inquire after them—I will thank you. To each of these ladies a salary of fifteen dollars a week I can venture offering—15 dollars are upward of three Guineas and Benefit annually.

Now, Sir, I have offered to you and those Ladies as much as I can in honesty afford to give, their travelling expenses to and from Theatres in the United States (not including board) I should defray, as I told you respecting your own — and the use of their names for benefits on Stock nights. — Your line of business would be exclusively *yours*. For the ladies I would not make this guaranty — The greatest actress in the World I may say is now in this city (Mrs. D —) \* and several very talented women — besides I would endeavor to make such arrangements

\* MARY A. D. DUFF [1794-1857]. This was, probably, the greatest tragic actress that ever trod our stage. It was to her that the poet Moore addressed his lovely melody, "While gazing on the Moon's Light." She was born in London; married John R. Duff, of the Dublin stage; came with him to America in 1810; and in subsequent years had a career of astonishing brilliancy, - darkened, however, by much personal misfortune. She died, of cancer, at No. 36 West Ninth Street, New York, and is buried in Greenwood (Lot 8,999, grave 805). Her life, written by Mr. Ireland, is shortly to be published. Ludlow describes her as "refined, quiet, yet powerful; not boisterous, yet forcible; graceful in all her motions, and dignified without stiffness." She had lived a Catholic all her days, but became a Methodist toward the last, after her marriage with Mr. J. G. Sevier, of New Orleans. Her death and burial were obscure; and for many years her final fate remained unknown, - some of her relatives being averse to the association of her name with the stage, and desirous of burying the whole subject in oblivion. She was a good woman as well as a great actress, and her name will live in honorable renown. - W. W.

for Miss P — and Miss H — as would not be very repugnant to their ambition.

The reason Mrs. D — does not go to London is my strenuous advice to her against it.— The passages from Europe I should expect repaid to me out of the salaries, by weekly deductions of three dollars each. The captain of the ship would call upon the parties or you might write to them on his visit to you. Everything on board will be furnished that is requisite for comfort, and the expenses I will settle for here previous to starting Mind the ship you would come over in is one expressly bargained for, and will bring you where I shall (if living) be ready to welcome you —

Let me recomend you to Economy—see what a number of our brethren are reduced to Indigence by their obstinate Vanity—I have here Mr. D—who was once in London the rival of Elliston, and is now a better actor—approaching the age of sixty, and not a dollar put by for a rainy day—too proud to accept a salary of twenty dollars per week in a regular engagement—he stars and starves. Many have been deceived and misled in their calculations in coming to this country—some have cut their throats &c from disappointment—Mrs. Romer (once of the Surrey) Mrs. Alsop Mr. Entwistle—Kirby the Clown—are all on the felo de se list—with others I now forget—

The temptations to Drunkenness here are too common and too powerful for many weak beings who construe the approval of a boisterous circle of intoxicated fools as the climax of everything desirable in their profession.— What do they find it, when a weakened shattered fraim, with loss of memory and often reason, are the results.— The hangers on—drop astern—and the poor wreck drives down the Gulf despised or pitied, and totally deserted.

If you choose accepting my offer — get for me those ladies. Sims can perhaps tell you where they are, and I will on the first occasion send for you and them, with the articles of agreement to be signed in London and legally ratified on your arrival in America—recollect this—the Passages in Summer, owing to

the calms are longer in performing, but they are much safer, and the Newfoundland Bank is an ugly place to cross in Winter, though it is often done, yet still it is a great risk.

The Crisis which left London Docks, last January with all her passengers after being out for 68 days, and being spoken to on the banks by another vessel—is not yet come or will she ever—The icebergs no doubt struck her, as they have many—and the last farewell was echoed by the waves.—

Write to me soon and glean the information I ask for —

The letter bag for United States vessels — from London is kept at the North American Coffee House near the Bank of England.

Yours truly,

Воотн.

Macready came to Philadelphia in the season of 1826-27, to act at the Chestnut, and on the day of his arrival was entertained at dinner, by the manager, Wood, —Jefferson being one of the guests. The next morning a rehearsal of "Macbeth" occurred, and Jefferson, who was lame with gout, appeared with a cane in his hand. This was an infraction of the well-known rule, but it was understood in the company that Mr. Jefferson was ill, and therefore the breach of stage etiquette was not regarded. The comedian was to enact the First Witch. Macready immediately observed the cane, and with his customary arrogance determined to assert himself. "Tell that person," he said, "to put down his cane." The prompter, thus commanded, delivered his message. "Tell Mr. Macready," said Jefferson, "that I shall not act with him during his engagement"; and he left the stage. "Mr. Macready had a right," he afterwards remarked, "to object to the carrying of a cane, at rehearsal; but it was obvious to

me that this was not his point. He chose to disregard the fact that we were, and had met as, social equals, and to omit the civility of a word of inquiry which would have procured immediate explanation. His purpose was to overbear and humiliate me, so as to discipline and subjugate the rest of the company. It was a rude exercise of authority, and its manner was impertinent."

The company at the Chestnut this season (which opened December 4th, 1826, with "The Stranger,") included Jefferson, Warren, Wood, Wemyss, Cowell, John Jefferson, Porter, W. Forrest, Heyl, Singleton, Meer, Jones, Wheatley, Webb, Darley, Hallam, Green, Bignall, Hosack, Parker, Murray, Garner, Howard, Klett, Mrs. Wood, Mrs. Jefferson, Mrs. Anderson, Mrs. Francis, Mrs. J. Jefferson, Mrs. Greene, Mrs. Darley, Mrs. Cowell, Mrs. Meer, Mrs. Murray, and the Misses Hathwell.

Among the contemporary opinions of Jefferson that should be cited is that of John P. Kennedy, the novelist, author of "Horse-shoe Robinson," etc., who wrote of this great actor as follows: "He played everything that was comic, and always made people laugh until the tears came in their eyes. . . . I don't believe he ever saw the world doing anything else. Whomsoever he looked at laughed. Before he came through the side scenes, when he was about to enter, he would pronounce the first words of his part, to herald his appearance, and instantly the whole audience set up a shout. It was only the sound of his voice. He had a patent right to shake the world's diaphragm, which seemed to be infallible. When he acted, families all went to-

gether, old and young. Smiles were on every face; the town was happy."

"In low or eccentric comedy," says Ireland, "he has rarely been equalled; yet his success in other lines was very great."

In the same vein wrote the poet, N. P. Willis: "In the days of 'Salmagundi,' in the days when the leaders of intellect and of society were frequenters of our theatres, flourished Jefferson (the Second); and there are some yet living who will speak to us with all the fondness of early recollections, connected with the freshness of life, of one who now lies mouldering beneath the sod."

These tributes are examples of the general testimony of his time, with reference to Jefferson the Second. He was a man of original mind, studious habits, fine temperament, natural dignity, and great charm of character, and his life was free from contention, acrimony, and reproach. How full it was of labor, and what wide versatility of shining intellectual power it exemplified, may, perhaps, be suggested by the specification of some of the parts that he acted. The list comprises one hundred and ninety-eight characters — (more than were undertaken by Macklin, who presented but one hundred and fifty-eight,) and it is incomplete; but it is an eloquent voucher for the powers and devoted zeal of the actor, and it may serve to suggest reflection on the quality of dramatic entertainment that was relished in a past age.

## PARTS ACTED BY JEFFERSON THE SECOND.

Squire Richard, in "The Provoked Husband, or A Journey to London." Comedy. By Colley Cibber. Drury Lane, 1728.

Tagg, in "The Spoiled Child." Farce. Drury Lane, 1790. Attributed to Isaac Bickerstaffe.

Young Clackett, in "The Guardian." Comedy. By David Garrick. Drury Lane, 1759, 1773. Based on "La Pupille," by M. Fagan.

La Gloire, in "The Surrender of Calais." Play By George Colman, Jr. Haymarket, 1791. Based on a French novel.

Sebastien, in "The Midnight Hour." Comedy. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Covent Garden, 1788. From the French of of M. Damaniant.

William, in the opera of "Rosina." By Mrs. Brooke. Covent Garden, 1783. Story of Boaz and Ruth, in the Bible.

Bombastes Furioso, in the burlesque tragic opera of that name.

Sir Harry Harmless, in "I'll Tell You What." Comedy. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Haymarket, 1785–86. Colman named this piece.

One of the Philosophers, in "The Merry Girl, or The Two Philosophers."

Grime, in "The Deserted Daughter." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1795.—This piece was sometimes acted under the name of "The Steward."—Item, in this, was also one of Jefferson's characters.

Don Vincentio, in "A Bold Stroke for a Husband." Comedy. By Mrs. Hannah Cowley. Covent Garden, 1783.

Sir David Daw, in "The Wheel of Fortune." Comedy. By Richard Cumberland. Drury Lane, 1795.

Endless, in "The Young Quaker." Comedy. By John O'Keefe. Haymarket, 1783.

Adonis, alias Joe the Shepherd, in "Poor Vulcan, or Gods upon Earth." Burlesque. By Charles Dibdin. Covent Garden, 1778.

Charles in "Know Your Own Mind." Comedy. By Arthur Murphy. Covent Garden, 1777. The character of Dashwould, in this piece, was intended to portray Foote, the actor and dramatist.

Dorilas, in "The Whims of Galatea, or The Power of Love." Jefferson painted the scenery for this piece, at the John Street Theatre, New York, March, 1796.

Edward, in "The Haunted Tower." Comic Opera. By James Cobb. Drury Lane, 1789.

Papillion, in "The Liar." Comedy. By Samuel Foote. Covent Garden, 1762.

Sadi, the Moor, in "The Mountaineers, or Love and Madness." Play. By George Colman, Jr. Haymarket, 1795. Based on the episode of Cardenio, in "Don Quixote."—"Jefferson's Sadi was universally admired and applauded. The music of the piece he is perfectly acquainted with, and his manner of delivering the duets, in conjunction with Mrs. Wilmot's notes, in Agnes, communicated the highest gratification and delight. Few theatres can boast of such a Sadi or of such an Agnes?"—The Thespian Monitor, December 16th, 1809.

Davy, in "Bon Ton." Farce. By David Garrick. Drury Lane, 1775.

Lieutenant, in "The Archers, or The Mountaineers of Switzerland." Opera. By William Dunlap. Called, also, "William Tell; or, The Archers."

Tallboy, in "The Spanish Barber." Musical Farce. By George Colman, Sr. Haymarket, 1777.

Carlos, in "The Man of Fortitude."

Polonius, and Osric, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Hamlet." — "Jefferson was the best Polonius that ever trod the American stage. No other actor ever succeeded so well in combining the courtier and the gentleman with the humorist. He gave elegance and dignity to the character." — Old N. Y. Spirit of the Times.

Silky, in "The Road to Ruin." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1792.

Clown, in "Harlequin's Vagaries." - There are many old

plays on the subject of Harlequin. The Biographia Dramatica mentions no less than sixty of them.

Witzki, in "Zorinski." Drama. By Thomas Morton. Haymarket, 1795.

Toby Thatch, in "The London Hermit, or Rambles in Dorsetshire." Comedy. By John O'Keefe. Haymarket, 1793.

Varland, in "The West Indian." Comedy. By Richard Cumberland. Drury Lane, 1771.

Officer, in "The Independence of America." Pantomine. 1796.

Touchstone, Adam, Le Beau, and William, in Shakespeare's comedy of "As You Like It."

Gregory Gubbin, in "The Battle of Hexham." Drama. By George Colman, Jr. Music by Dr. Arnold. Haymarket, 1789. Story of Margaret, Queen to Henry VI. befriended by a bandit.

Dickey Gossip, in "My Grandmother." Farce. By Prince Hoare. Drury Lane, 1796.

Leopold, in "The Siege of Belgrade." Comic Opera. By James Cobb. Music by Stephen Storace. Jefferson painted scenery for this.

Herbert, in "The Man of Ten Thousand." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Drury Lane, 1796.

Tom Holton, in "Tell Truth and Shame the Devil." Comedy. By William Dunlap. John Street Theatre, New York, 1797. Reduced to one act, and played at Covent Garden, London, May 18th, 1799, for benefit of Mrs. Johnson.

Don Ferolo Whiskerandos, in "The Critic." Farce. By Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Drury Lane, 1779.

Robert, in "The Prisoner." Musical Piece. By John Rose.

Jack Arable, in "Speculation." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1795.

Osman, in "The Two Misers." Farce. By Kane O'Hara. Covent Garden, 1775.

David Mowbray, in "First Love, or The French Emigrant." Comedy. Drury Lane, 1795. — Dora Jordan was admirably good as Sabina Rosni,—the part acted in America by Mrs. Hodgkinson.

Michael, in "The Adopted Child." Musical piece. By Samuel Birch. Drury Lane, 1795.

Dogberry, and also Verges, in Shakespeare's comedy of "Much Ado About Nothing."

Sancho, in "Love Makes a Man, or The Fop's Fortune." Comedy. By Colley Cibber. Drury Lane, 1701.

Sir Adam Contest, in "The Wedding Day." Comedy. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Drury Lane, 1794.

Peter, in "The Stranger." Dunlap's version of Kotzebue's drama.

Nicholas Rue, in "Secrets Worth Knowing." Comedy. By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1798.

Sir Peter Curious, in "The Telegraph." Comedy. By John Dent. Covent Garden, 1795.

Williams, in "He's Much to Blame." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1798.

Lafleur, in "Sterne's Maria, or The Vintage." Opera. By William Dunlap. Music by Pellesier, 1799.

Realize, in "The Will." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Drury Lane, 1797.

Sir Stately Perfect, in "The Natural Daughter." Comedy. By William Dunlap. 1799. New York Park Theatre.

Stephen, in "Every Man in His Humor." Comedy. By Ben Jonson. 1598.

Count Cassell, in "Lover's Vows." Drama. Adapted by William Dunlap, from Kotzebue. New York Park, 1799.

James, in "Bourville Castle." Musical Drama. By Rev. John Blair Linn. 1797.

Sir Samuel Sheepy, in "The School for Arrogance." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1791.

Toby Allspice, in "The Way to get Married." Comedy. By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1796.

Bluntly, in "Next Door Neighbors." Comedy. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Haymarket, 1791.

Jack Meggott, in "The Suspicious Husband." Comedy. By

Dr. Benjamin Hoadly. Covent Garden, 1747. Garrick was famously good, in this piece, as Ranger. George the Second sent the author one hundred pounds, as a compliment. Foote says, of this part of Jack Meggott: "The importation of fopperies from France we have laughed at till we are tired. Our author was willing to try whether Italy could not furnish a fool as ridiculous and diverting as our neighbors. But no sooner has Jack Meggott raised our attention but he slips through our fingers like an eel, and we hear no more of him till the last scene. He does in truth survive the loss of his monkey; but he is never tolerable company after."

Cloten, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Cymbeline."

Ralph, in "Lock and Key." Musical Farce. By Prince Hoare. Covent Garden, 1796-97.

Plainwell, in "A Quarter of An Hour Before Dinner." Farce. By Rev. John Rose. Haymarket, 1788.

Frank, in "Half an Hour After Supper." Haymarket, 1789.

Tom Seymour, in "Fortune's Fool." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1796.

Sir Shenkin, in "Fontainebleau, or Our Way in France." Comic Opera. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1784. The sub-title given to this piece when it was acted in America was "John Bull in Paris." The part of Sir Shenkin Ap Griffin was subsequently changed, by the author, to Squire Tallyho.

Septimus, in "The Doldrum." Farce. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1796.

Lord Grizzle, in "The Life and Death of Tom Thumb, the Great." Burlesque. 1785.

Jack Bowline, and also Captain Bertram, in "Fraternal Discord." Drama, adapted, from the German of Kotzebue, by William Dunlap. John Street Theatre, 1800.

Farmer Ashfield, in "Speed the Plough." Comedy. By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1800.—Ireland cites a critical opinion on Jefferson's personation of Farmer Ashfield, which is suggestively descriptive of his quality and style: "No man possessed such happy requisites for exhibiting this

character in the true colors of nature as Mr. Jefferson. In the rustic deportment and dialect, in the artless effusions of benignity and undisguised truth, and in those masterly strokes of pathos and simplicity with which the author has finished the inimitable picture, Mr. Jefferson showed uniform excellence; and, as, in the humorous parts, his comic powers produced their customary effect, so, in the serious overflowings of the honest farmer's nature, the mellow, deep, impressive tones of the actor's voice vibrated to the heart, and produced the most intense and exquisite sensations."—*Mirror of Taste*, Vol. I. page 75.

Lord Listless, in "The East Indian." Comedy. By M. G.

Lewis. Drury Lane, 1799.

Launcelot Gobbo, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Merchant of Venice."

Pero, in "The Spanish Castle, or the Knight of Guadalquiver." Musical Drama. By William Dunlap. Music by Hewitt. 1800.

Memno, in "Abaellino." Drama, by William Dunlap, from the German of Zsokke.

Lackbrain, in "Life." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1801.

Kourakim, in "The Captive of Spilsberg." Drama. By Prince Hoare. Drury Lane, 1799.

Hans Molkin, in "The Wild Goose Chase." Translated by William Dunlap.

Young Scharfeneck, in "The Force of Calumny." Drama. Adapted from the German, by William Dunlap.

Sambo, in "Laugh When You Can." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1799.

Diego, in "The Virgin of the Sun." Drama. Translated from Kotzebue. Jefferson also acted, later, Orozembo, in "Pizarro, or the Death of Rolla,"—another version of the same piece.

Conrad, in "The Stranger's Birthday," a sequel to Kotzebue's play of "The Stranger."

Ferrett, in "The Horse and the Widow." Farce. Altered from the German of Kotzebue, by Thomas Dibdin. Covent Garden, 1799.

Sir Matthew Maxim, in "Five Thousand A Year." Comedy. By Thomas Dibdin: Covent Garden, 1799.

Jack Acorn, in "Columbia's Daughters." Drama. By Mrs. Susanna Rowson, Author of "The Female Patriot," "Slaves in Algiers," "Charlotte Temple," "Americans in England," and other pieces. — 1800.

Sir William Howe, in "Bunker Hill, or The Death of Warren." Drama. By John D. Burke, 1797.

Samuel, in "The Indians in England, or The Nabob of Mysore." Drama. Adapted by William Dunlap, from Kotzebue.

Stephano, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Tempest."

Soleby, in "The School for Soldiers." Play, from the French, by William Dunlap.

Zekiel Homespun, in "The Heir at Law." Comedy. By George Coleman, Jr. Haymarket, 1797.

Jew, in "Self-Immolation, or Family Distress." Drama. Adapted, from Kotzebue, by William Dunlap.

Some of the old-fashioned, once popular, but now faded and forgotten melo-dramas rejoiced in wonderful titles. Sol Smith once produced a piece entitled "The Hunter of the Alps, or The Runaway Horse that Threw His Rider in the Forest of Savoy." And there is in print a remarkable play, called "The Lonely Man of the Ocean, or The Night Before The Bridal, with the Terrors of the Yellow Admiral and the Perils of the Battle and the Breeze."

John, in "False Shame." Drama. Adapted from the German, by William Dunlap.

Louis, in "The Robbery." Drama by Monvel. Translated by William Dunlap.

Toby, in "The Wandering Jew, or Love's Masquerade." Comedy. By Andrew Franklin. Drury Lane, 1797.

Cloddy, in "The Mysteries of the Castle." By Miles Peter Andrews. Covent Garden, 1795.

Motley, in "The Castle Spectre." Drama. By Matthew Gregory Lewis. Drury Lane, 1798.—"A story has been told that about the end of the season (this piece having proved very

successful), Mr. Sheridan and the author had a dispute, in the green-room; when the latter offered, in confirmation of his arguments, to bet all the money which 'The Castle Spectre' had brought, that he was right. 'No,' said Sheridan: 'I cannot afford to bet all it has brought; but I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll bet you all it is worth.'"—Biographia Dramatica.

Paulo, in "The Italian Monk." Drama. By James Boaden. 1797. Founded on Mrs. Radcliffe's novel, of that name.

Hurry, in "The Maid of the Oaks." Farce. By Gen. John Burgoyne. Drury Lane, 1774. Covent Garden, with Mrs. Abington in it, 1782.—This author was the pretentious British commander who capitulated to General Gates, at Saratoga, in 1777,—prompting Sheridan's couplet:

"Burgoyne defeated — oh, ye Fates, Could not this Samson carry Gates!"

Kudrin, in "Count Benyowski." Drama. By William Dunlap. Park, 1799.

Fool, in "The Italian Father." Drama. By William Dunlap. Park, 1799.

Marshal Ingelheim, in "The Harper's Daughter, or Love and Ambition." Called, also, "The Minister." Drama. Adapted by M. G. Lewis, from "Love and Intrigue," by Schiller.

Bribon, in "Columbus."

Jack Stocks, in "The Lottery." Farce. By Henry Fielding. Drury Lane, 1731.

Don Guzman, in "The Follies of A Day." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1785. Adapted from "La Folle Journée," by Beaumarchais.

Humphrey Grizzle, and also Frank, in "The Three and the Deuce." Comedy. By Prince Hoare. Haymarket, 1795.

This piece is suggestive of both the "Comedy of Errors" and "She Stoops to Conquer." The comic effect is obtained by means of complications arising out of the bewildering resemblance between three brothers,—each being mistaken for another, and all displayed at cross purposes with the rest of the characters. Frank is a rustic, of the Zekiel Homespun stripe; Humphrey Grizzle an opinionated, cranky, eccentric old ser-

vant, whose perplexity affords much amusement. The three brothers, — Percival, Peregrine, and Pertinax Single, — who "raise the Deuce" by being exactly alike in appearance but very diverse in character and conduct, are acted by one and the same person.

Scaramouch, in "Don Juan."

Bras De Fer, in Tekeli, or "The Siege of Montgatz." Melodrama. By T. H. Hook. Drury Lane, 1806.

Justice Greedy, in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts." Comedy. By Philip Massinger. Acted at the Phœnix in Drury Lane, 1633. Jargon, in "The Bulse of Diamonds, or What is She?" [Dr. Doddrell?]

Alibi, in "The Toy, or The Lie of the Day." Comedy. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1789.

Tom Starch, in "The Wise Man of the East." Play. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Adapted from Kotzebue. Covent Garden. 1799.

Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Oliver Surface, Charles Surface, Crabtree, and Moses, in "The School For Scandal." Comedy. By Richard Brinsley Sheridan. First acted May 8th, 1777, at Drury Lane.

Sheepface, in "The Village Lawyer." Farce. From the French, 1795.

Block, in "Where is He?" Farce. By William Dunlap. 1801.

Dubois in "The Abbé de L'Épée, or Deaf and Dumb." 1801.

Guillot, in "Richard Cœur de Lion." Historical Play. By
Gen. John Burgoyne. Drury Lane, 1786.

Sir Robert Bramble, and also Dr. Ollapod, in "The Poor Gentleman." Comedy. By George Colman, Jr. Covent Garden, 1802.

Peter Postobit, in "Folly As It Flies." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1802.

Lodowick, in "Adelmorn, the Outlaw." Drama. By M. G. Lewis. Drury Lane, 1801.

Ibrahim, in "Blue Beard, or Female Curiosity." Musical Extravaganza By George Colman, Jr. Drury Lane, 1798.

Muley Hassan, in "Fiesco." Drama. From the German of Schiller. 1796, 1798.

Dominique, in the opera of "Paul and Virginia." By James Cobb. Music by Mazzinghi and Reeve. Covent Garden, 1800.

Mendoza, in "The Duenna." Comic Opera. By R. B. Sheridan. Covent Garden, 1775.

Colin, in "The Irish Mimic, or Blunders at Brighton." Musical Farce. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1795.

Nicholas, in "The Follies of Fashion." Comedy. By Leonard McNally. Original title "Fashionable Levities." Covent Garden, 1785.

Francis, in Shakespeare's play of "King Henry IV."

Cadi, in "Il Bondocani." Comic Opera. By Thomas Dibdin, 1801. Music by Boieldieu. Afterwards played as "The Caliph of Bagdad."

Sharpset, in "The Votary of Wealth." Comedy. By J. G. Holman. Covent Garden, 1799.

Mawworm, in "The Hypocrite." Comedy. By Isaac Bickerstaffe. Drury Lane, 1768. An alteration of Cibber's "The Non-Juror."

Bobby Pendragon, in "Which Is the Man?" Comedy. By Mrs. Hannah Cowley. Covent Garden, 1783.

Lord Foppington, in "The Relapse." Comedy. By Sir John Vanbrugh. Drury Lane, 1708. Altered, and named "The Country Heiress."

Gil Blas, in a pantomime play entitled "Gil Blas."

John, in a farce called "The Wheel of Truth," by James Fennell, the actor. Park, 1803.

Ephraim, in "The School for Prejudice." Comedy. By Thomas Dibdin. Covent Garden, 1801. An enlargement of its author's previous comedy of "Liberal Opinions."

Thomas, in "The Good Neighbor." Farce.

Precipe Rebate, in "Retaliation." Farce. By Leonard McNally. Covent Garden, 1782.

Michelli, in "A Tale of Mystery." Melodrama. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1802. Jefferson also acted Francisco, in this piece.

Carlos, in "The Blind Boy." An alteration, made by William Dunlap, of Kotzebue's "The Epigram."

Quillet, in "Hear Both Sides." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Drury Lane, 1803.

Don Manuel, in "She Would and She Would Not." Comedy. By Colley Cibber. Drury Lane, 1703.

Robert Grange, in "Delays and Blunders." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1803.

John Lump, in "The Review, or The Wags of Windsor." Musical Farce. By George Colman, Jr. Haymarket, 1808.

Lord Dartford, in "The Fair Fugitive, or He Forgot Himself." This was "The Fair Fugitives," a musical extravaganza, by Miss Anna Maria Porter. Music by Dr. Busby. Acted at Covent Garden, 1803.

Matthew Mug, in "A House To Be Sold." Musical piece. By James Cobb. Music by Kelly. Drury Lane, 1802. Altered and enlarged from a French piece, entitled "Maison à Vendre."

Sir Benjamin Dove, in "The Brothers." Comedy. By Richard Cumberland. Covent Garden, 1769.

Jeremy Diddler, in "Raising the Wind." Farce. By James Kenney. Covent Garden. 1803.—Lewis was the original Jeremy.—"Diddler has been attempted by many celebrated comedians, but by none so successfully as by Jefferson, who exhibits the various dispositions of Jeremy with admirable effect."—The Thespian Monitor.

Solus, in "Every One Has His Fault." Comedy. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Covent Garden, 1793.

Fixture, in "A Roland for an Oliver." Comedy, 1819.

Jacques, and also Rolando, in "The Honeymoon." Comedy. By John Tobin. Drury Lane, 1805.

Dromio of —, in Shakespeare's "Comedy of Errors." Cowell was the other Dromio.

Roderigo, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Othello."

Mercutio, and also Peter, in "Romeo and Juliet." The former part he acted for the first time, at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in the season of 1815–16.

Timothy Quaint, in "The Soldier's Daughter." Comedy. By Andrew Cherry. Drury Lane, 1804. — Edwin Forrest, in his youth, often acted Malfort, in this piece. "The Soldier's

Daughter" was revived in Boston, at the Globe Theatre, in June, 1872, but failed.

Drugget, in "Three Weeks After Marriage." Comedy. By Arthur Murphy. Covent Garden, 1776.

Apollo Belvi, and also Buskin, in "Killing No Murder." Farce. By Theodore E. Hook. Haymarket, 1809. The elder Mathews was the original Buskin.

Doctor Last, in "The Devil upon Two Sticks." Comedy. By Samuel Foote. Haymarket, 1768. The original Doctor Last was Weston. Foote acted the Devil.

Tim Tartlet, in "The First Floor." Farce. By James Cobb. Drury Lane, 1787.

Carlos, in "The Man of Fortitude." Drama, 1797. Alleged author, Hodgkinson; but Mr. Dunlap claimed the piece as his own, under the name of "The Knight's Adventure," and said that Hodgkinson made use of his manuscript.

Jasper Lunge, in "A Good Spec-Land in the Moon." Farce, 1797.

Ennui, in "The Dramatist." Comedy. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, 1789.

Frank Oatland, in "A Cure for the Heartache." Comedy. By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1797. This was among Jefferson's best performances.

Jacob Gawky, in "A Chapter of Accidents." Comedy. By Miss Sophia Lee. Haymarket, 1780.

Kit Cosey, in "Town and Country." By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1807.

Tristram Fickle, in "The Weathercock." Farce. By J. T. Allingham. Drury Lane, 1806. — "Jefferson's Tristram, lively, active, and productive of real merriment." — Thespian Monitor, December 13th, 1809.

Stave, in "The Shipwreck." Comic Opera. By S. J. Arnold. Drury Lane, 1796.

Sampson Rawbold, in "The Iron Chest." Tragedy. By George Colman, Jr. Drury Lane, 1796.

Bob Acres, in "The Rivals." Comedy. By Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Covent Garden, 1775.

Sir Owen Ap Griffith, in "The Welsh Girl." Vaudeville.

Old Rapid, in "A Cure for the Heartache." Comedy. By Thomas Morton. Covent Garden, 1797.

Captain Flash, in "Miss in her Teens." Farce. By David Garrick. Covent Garden, 1747.

Dr. Lenitive, in "The Prize; or 2-5-3-8."

Dominie Sampson, in "Guy Mannnering." Musical Play. By Daniel Terry. Covent Garden, 1816.

Caleb, in "He would be a Soldier." Comedy. By Frederick Pillon. Covent Garden, 1786.

Dr. Smugface, in "A Budget of Blunders." Farce. By Prince Hoare. Covent Garden, 1810.

One of the illustrations in this memoir presents Mr. Jefferson as *Dr. Smugface*, and Mr. Blissett, as *Dr. Dablancour*, in this farce. Mr. Jefferson wore a false nose, in *Dr. Smugface*, skilfully made of wax, which increased the comicality of his aspect, in this irate character.

FRANCIS BLISSETT was one of the most charming actors of this delightful dramatic period. He was born in London, about the year 1773, and spent his early days at Bath. His father was a favorite comic actor, and the son early exhibited dramatic talent. He was taught music, and at first destined to that pursuit; but, at the age of eighteen, he made such a successful début - appearing as Dr. Last, on the occasion of his father's benefit - that it was thought best to devote him to the stage. He came to America, in 1793, and joined Wignell's company, at the Philadelphia Theatre (the Chestnut), and with that troupe he was connected for twenty-eight years. In 1821, having, by the death of his father, come into possession of a considerable inheritance, he withdrew from public life and from America, and established his residence in the island of Guernsey, where he died, at the age of seventy-five. He was a thoughtful man, of melancholy temperament and reserved demeanor, fond of books and of music, and a skilful player of the violin. His style of acting was marked by exquisite delicacy and finish. He preferred to act little parts and make them perfect, rather than to exercise his powers upon those of magnitude. His humor was dry and quaint. He could speak with a capital Irish brogue, or with a French or a German accent. Among the parts in which he was excellent are Dr. Caius, the Mock Duke, in "The Honeymoon," the Clown, in "As You Like It," Crabtree, David, in "The Rivals," Crack, Verges, Dr. Dablancour, Sheepface, Dennis Brulgruddery, and the First Gravedigger. He was averse to society, seldom spoke, and was observed to be usually sad and distant in manner. It is said he was a natural child, and this circumstance bred in him an habitual reserve. He was benevolent, but by stealth, and shunned ostentation. He cultivated but few friendships, yet was greatly respected and liked. No character of the entire group is more interesting than that of Blissett.

Nipperkin, in "The Sprigs of Laurel." Comic Opera. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1793. Afterwards acted under the title of "The Rival Soldiers."

Captain Copp, in "Charles the Second." Comedy. By John Howard Payne.

La Fleur, in "Animal Magnetism." Farce. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Covent Garden, 1788. Of French Origin.

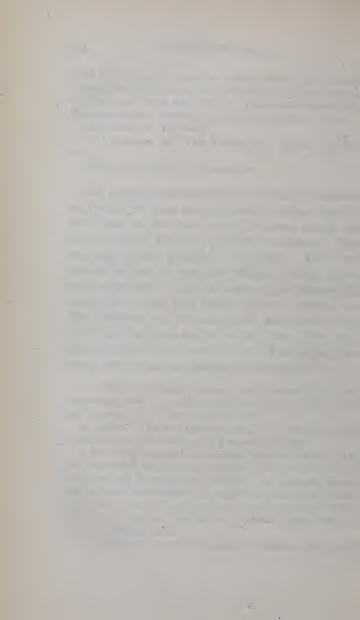
Job Thornbury, in "John Bull." Comedy. By George Colman, Jr. Covent Garden, 1805.

Sir Hugh Evans, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

Gregory, in "The Mock Doctor, or the Dumb Lady Cured." Farce. By Henry Fielding. Drury Lane, 1732.

This piece was taken from "Le Médecin malgré Lui," by Molière,—which work was originally named "Le Fagotier." The story is that the wife of a wood-cutter, in order to be revenged on her husband, for his ill-treatment of her, told two strangers that he was a learned physician, who would not, however, give his medical knowledge and care, until he had been soundly thrashed; whereupon they compelled him to attempt the cure of a girl who had been feigning dumbness in order to avoid an obnoxious marriage, and, ultimately, to assist in an elopement. The situations in "The Mock Doctor" had previously been used, in "Love's Contrivance" (1703), by

Susanna Centlivre, and "The Dumb Lady" (1672), by John Lacy. The subject is treated in an opera by Gounod, produced at the Théâtre Lyrique, Paris, January 15th, 1858, and at the Princess's Theatre, London, early in 1865. It is related that David Garrick, before he finally decided to adopt the dramatic profession, chose this play of "The Mock Doctor," to test his powers. The particulars of this incident are given as follows: "The place was the room over St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell. The stage was improvised, and suitable decorations were provided for the occasion. The time was soon after Garrick's friend and tutor Samuel Johnson had formed a close intimacy with Cave, the printer and publisher of the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' and while Garrick was still in the wine trade with his brother Peter, and secretly meditating a withdrawal from it, in order to adopt the congenial, but in the opinion of his friends the disreputable, calling of an actor. The audience was composed, first of Cave himself, who, though not a man given to mirth, or with an idea beyond his printing presses, had been tickled by Johnson's description of his young townsman's powers, and was willing to try the experiment on his risibility. Then there was the burly lexicographer, — in those days very shabby and seedy indeed, but proudly battling his way in the world, and not a little elated by reflecting on the figure which the boys, who had enjoyed with him and Garrick the advantage of being flogged and taught by Mr. Hunter of Litchfield, were likely to make in it. Several of Cave's literary handicraftsmen were doubtless among the audience: Webb, the enigma writer, Derrick, the pen-cutter, and 'Tobacco' Browne, whose serious poetry even the religious Johnson himself confessed he was unable to read with patience. The actors who assisted Garrick were some of Cave's journeymen printers, who had for the time laid aside their composing sticks, and read or recited the parts allotted to them as best they could. Garrick, of course, played the involuntary physician Gregory, as Fielding renamed him; and we have all read how Johnson, in his later years, returning from the Mitre, or the Cheshire Cheese, with Boswell, in the early morning, would grasp the street-post by Temple Gate, and







is remembered on the stage as correct and pleasing. She married William Anderson, - described by Ludlow as "a good actor in heavy characters, tragedy villains and the like," - but he was a worthless person, and he embittered her life. This marriage was a sad blow to her father. She was a member of the dramatic company at the New York Park Theatre in 1816, and of the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1817. "Mrs. Anderson, late Miss Jefferson," says Wood, in his "Personal Recollections," "was now added to the company, and shortly reached a high place in public favor." She died in 1831, leaving two daughters, Jane and Elizabeth. - JANE ANDERSON came out at the Franklin Theatre, New York, August 15th, 1836, as Sally Giggle, in "Catching an Heiress." She has had a bright career on the stage, and is a superior representative of old women. She became Mrs. G. C. GERMON, and has long been a resident of Baltimore. MISS EFFIE GERMON, born at Augusta, Georgia, on June 13th, 1840, and now the sparkling soubrette of Wallack's Theatre, is her daughter, and thus a descendant of Jefferson the First. The father, G. C. Germon, the original Uncle Tom, died at Chicago, in April, 1854, aged thirty-eight. - ELIZABETH ANDERSON came out at the Franklin Theatre, August 1st, 1836, as Mrs. Nicely, and she also has had a good theatrical career. This lady was married, in 1837, to Mr. Jacob Thoman, and subsequently, as MRS. THOMAN, she became a favorite in Boston. She accompanied Mr. Thoman to California, where she obtained a divorce from him; and afterwards she again married, becoming Mrs. Saunders. She is still living. Both Jane and Elizabeth Anderson had played, as early as 1831, in the theatre at Washington, managed by their uncle Joseph (Jefferson the Third). Elizabeth, although very young, acted old women. She was at the Walnut Street Theatre, Pa., in 1835. - WILLIAM ANDERSON, the father of these girls, after a career of painful irregularity, ending in indigence, died, in 1869, at a hospital in Philadelphia. Cowell remarks that Jemmy Bland's answer when adrift in the words - to the question, "Who is this Coriolanus?" describes Anderson exactly: "Why, he's a fellow who is always going about grumbling, and making everybody uncomfortable."

5. HESTER became MRS. ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, first wife of the noted actor and manager of that name, in the West. Mackenzie was a cousin to Joseph Neal, author of "Charcoal Sketches." Mrs. Mackenzie rose to a good position as an actress of old women. Her death occurred at Nashville, Tennessee, February 3d, 1845.

6. ELIZABETH, Mrs. Chapman-Richardson-Fisher. A brilliant and popular actress at the New York Park, in its great days.

Her career is sketched in a separate chapter.

7. MARY ANNE. She became the wife of DAVID INGERSOLL, a tragedian, of Philadelphia, who died at St. Louis in 1837, aged twenty-five. She subsequently married JAMES S. WRIGHT, for many years the prompter at Wallack's Theatre. This lady was a member of the Bowery Theatre company, New York, in 1834, and she has been a favorite in theatres on the western circuit. For many years, however, she has not acted.

8. Jane is remembered as a lovable girl, kind, quiet, domestic, and devoted to her family. She never went on the stage, but died in girlhood, aged only seventeen, in 1831.

Lives that do not imprint themselves strongly on the passing age are lost so quickly and so irretrievably that it seems as if they never had existed. There is something almost forlorn in the few slight and scattered memorials that remain of these persons; all of them at one time signed with a brilliant name, and actuated, no doubt, by a high ambition. Thomas Jefferson, as a lad, came out at the Park Theatre, New York, on May 27th, 1803, as the Boy, in "The Children in the Wood," — drama by Thomas Morton, the music by Dr. Arnold, first acted at the London Haymarket, in 1793, — and he was seen at the Chestnut, Philadelphia, January 1st, 1806, as Cupid, in the pantomime of "Cinderella," his father playing Pedro and his mother Thisbe; but his first im-

portant effort was made on October 7th, 1811, in his fifteenth year. The play was "The Merry Wives of Windsor." Warren acted Falstaff, Jefferson Sir Hugh Evans, Blissett Dr. Caius, Mackenzie Ford, and young Thomas Jefferson came on as Master Slender. result was recorded by a contemporary writer, Mr. S. C. Carpenter, the "Dramatic Censor" of "The Mirror of Taste" (Vol. IV., p. 297): "The chief novelty of the night and on many accounts a most pleasing one, was Mr. Jefferson's eldest son, in Master Slender. . . . A fine boy, and the son of one of the greatest favorites of the people of Philadelphia. . . . There was no blind, undistinguishing enthusiasm exhibited on the occasion. . . . The audience chose rather to reserve their praise till it would do the youth substantial credit by being bestowed only on desert; and in the full truth of severe criticism we declare that of the loud applause bestowed upon the boy there was not a plaudit which he did not deserve. From this juvenile specimen we are disposed to believe that he inherits the fine natural talents of his father."

In 1817 the three brothers, Thomas, John, and Joseph, acted together, in "Valentine and Orson."

In 1821 Mr. James H. Caldwell, the pioneer manager of the Southwest, — after old man-Drake, as the actors used to call him, and likewise after the veteran Ludlow, — had a good dramatic company at Petersburg, Virginia, of which "Mr. Jefferson," probably Thomas, was a member. This troupe included, says James Rees, in his "Dramatic Authors," p. 58, Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, Mr. and Mrs. Hutton, Mr. and Mrs. Rus-

sell, Mr. Gray, Mr. Ludlow, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Cafferty, Mr. Benton, Mr. West, Mr. Scholes, Mrs. Anderson, Miss Tilden, and Miss Eliza Placide.

The cause of the untimely death of Thomas Jefferson was an accident which happened to him on the stage, when he was doing a service for a brother actor. This was the vocalist and comedian John Darley (1780-1858), father of the distinguished artist Mr. Felix O. C. Darley, both of whose parents were ornaments of the early American theatre; his mother being Miss Ellen Westray. Darley was playing Paul, in the opera of "Paul and Virginia," and, feeling averse to making the leap from the rock, he asked young Jefferson to make it for him. The youth, who was playing the slave Alhambra, acceded to this request, plunged from the scenic precipice, and in so doing broke a blood-vessel in his lungs. This injury resulted in consumption; and, after a lingering illness, he expired in Philadelphia on September 16th, 1824. "He had been afflicted for some time," said a writer in the "National Intelligencer" of the 21st, "with a pulmonary complaint, which he bore with fortitude. His end was calm and resigned. . . . His friends valued him; their regret is mingled with the tears of his family; and his remembrance is drawn on a tablet whence passing occurrences cannot easily efface it." Alas for the permanence of human achievement! How completely effaced it is now!

Hester Jefferson (Mrs. Mackenzie) seems to have possessed the same patient and resigned nature. A Nashville journal, recording her death, says that "she bore a severe illness with Christian serenity," and that she was "a lady graced by many accomplishments, but still more by virtues which conciliated the esteem and affection of all who knew her." "There are many friends of her late father," adds this obituary tribute, "and of his family, in different parts of the Union, to whom this brief notice will recall many affecting associations. It will be a solace to them to know that she passed to the portals of the tomb in the full and joyous assurance of a blessed immortality."

The Chestnut Street Theatre, established by Thomas Wignell in 1792-94, was destroyed by fire in April, 1820, and all the accumulations of the finest dramatic temple in America were lost. It was rebuilt and reopened, but it seems never to have recovered its former glory. A change in the public taste as to theatrical matters was also maturing at about that time, and players, both women and men, who had long been favorites, were losing their hold upon popularity, in the gradual waning of the generation to which they belonged. Jefferson, now a frequent sufferer from hereditary gout, had begun somewhat to decline, alike in personal strength and popular favor. During the season of 1821, Jefferson, Francis, Wheatley, and others of the Chestnut company, were ill almost one third of the time, and could not appear. In the season of 1823-24, at Baltimore, Jefferson was ill nine nights, and did not act. The final scenes of his life's drama were being ushered in by these warnings of decay. Wood refers to unfriendly machinations against himself, which presently parted him from Warren, who was thus

left alone in the management, in 1826; and thereafter the business grew worse and worse, the receipts falling as low as \$98, \$90, \$61.50, and even \$20.75 a night, till at last Warren left the theatre, utterly ruined, in 1829. "Jefferson's last benefit," writes Wood, "took place on the 23d of December, 1829, and, being suddenly announced, failed to attract his old admirers to the house. He was now infirm and in ill spirits from domestic distresses, as well as the breaking up of the old management, and the gloomy professional prospects which that event placed before him. The play, 'A School for Grown Children,' had originally failed here, being remarkably local, and proved a singularly bad choice." This was a comedy by Morton, which Burton once gave in New York, under the borrowed name of "Begone Dull Care."]

Similar testimony is borne by Wemyss: "Jefferson, whose benefit was announced with the new play of 'A School for Grown Children,' could scarcely muster enough to pay the expenses, and resolved to leave the theatre. The manager, having demanded and received the full amount of his nightly charge on such occasions, offered him but half his income, at the treasury on Saturday. This was a blow the favorite comedian could not brook. The success of Sloman, an actor so greatly his inferior, had irritated him both with his manager and the audience. But what must have been the apathy of the public towards dramatic representation, when such a man, whose reputation shed lustre on the theatre to which he was attached, was permitted to leave the city of Philadelphia with scarcely an inquiry as to his where-

abouts; two thirds of the audience ignorant of his departure! The last time he acted in Philadelphia was for my benefit, kindly studying the part of *Sir Bashful Constant*, in 'The Way to Keep Him,' \* which he played admirably.''

That useful but disagreeable book of reminiscences (already cited), "Thirty Years Passed Among the Players in England and America," by Joseph Cowell, (1844), contains a kindred reference to the last days and the character of Jefferson. Cowell was the father of Samuel Cowell, the well-remembered actor and comic singer, and of Sydney Frances Cowell, who, as Mrs. Hezekiah L. Bateman, became known as a dramatic author, and as the mother of "the Bateman Children"; Kate, Ellen, and Virginia. Cowell succeeded Wood, as stage manager of the Chestnut, and it is to this period he refers, in the eighth chapter of his second volume, when writing of Jefferson:—

"Jefferson was the low comedian, and had been for more than five and twenty years. Of course he was a most overwhelming favorite, though at this time drops of pity for fast coming signs of age and infirmity began to be freely sprinkled with the approbation long habit more than enthusiasm now elicited. . . . Literally born on the stage, he brought with him to this country the experience of age with all the energy of youth, and

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Way to Keep Him." Comedy, by Arthur Murphy: Drury Lane, 1761. "Sir Bashful Constant is a gentleman who, though passionately fond of his wife, yet from a fear of being laughed at by the gay world for uxoriousness, is perpetually assuming the tyrant, and treating her, at least before company, with great unkindness."—W. W.

in the then infant state of the drama, his superior talent, adorned by his most exemplary private deportment, gave him lasting claims to the respect and gratitude, both of the profession and its admirers. And, perhaps, on some such imaginary reed he placed too much dependence; for the whole range of the drama cannot, probably, furnish a more painful yet perfect example of the mutability of theatrical popularity than Joseph Jefferson.

"When Warren left the management, younger, not better, actors were brought in competition with the veteran, and the same audience that had actually grown up laughing at him alone, as if they had been mistaken in his talent all this time suddenly turned their smiles on foreign faces; and, to place their changed opinion past a doubt, his benefits, which had never produced less than twelve or fourteen hundred dollars, and often sixteen, fell down to less than three. Wounded in pride, and ill prepared in pocket for this sudden reverse of favor and fortune, he bade adieu forever to Philadelphia. With the aid of his wife and children he formed a travelling company, and wandered through the smaller towns of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, making Washington his headquarters.\* Kindly

<sup>\*</sup> The comedian had long been accustomed to make periodical trips to Washington, and he knew his ground, therefore, on going into exile. "Washington city," says the same writer ["Thirty Years," Vol. II. chap. 10], "could then (1827) boast of only a very small theatre, in a very out-of-the-way situation, and used by Warren and Wood as a sort of summer retreat for their company, where the disciples of Izaak Walton, with old Jefferson at their head, could indulge their fishing propensities." . . . — W. W.

received and respected everywhere, his old age might still have passed in calm contentment, but that 'one woe did tread upon another's heel, so fast they followed.' His daughter, Mrs. Anderson, and his youngest, Jane, died in quick succession, after torturing hope with long and lingering disease. His son-in-law, Chapman, was thrown from a horse, and the week following was in his grave. His son John, an excellent actor, performed for his father's benefit, at Lancaster, Pa., was well and happy, went home, fell in a fit, and was dead. And last, not least, to be named in this sad list, the wife of his youth, the mother of his thirteen children, the sharer of his joys and sorrows for six and thirty years, was 'torn from out his heart.' 'The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" (Proverbs xviii. 14.)

To Wood the dramatic inquirer is indebted for an account of the closing days and the death of Jefferson, containing discriminative observations on his character, and such touches of color as are only to be conveyed in his own language. Though a cold and crabbed man, and more readily censorious than sympathetic, Wood has no word for Jefferson, except of profound respect and cordial kindness. "At an early age Jefferson anticipated the inheritance of his father's complaint (gout), and vainly endeavored, by a life of the severest care and regimen, to escape its assaults. For many years the attacks were slight, but with increasing age they increased also, and at length became so frequent and violent as to undermine his health and spirits. The decline of Warren's fortunes greatly distressed him. His

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associates of thirty years were disappearing from his side, and he retired suddenly from a stage of which for a quarter of a century he had been the delight, ornament, and boast. Like Warren he seemed unable to witness a ruin which he felt was inevitable, and he left Philadelphia forever. . . . I unexpectedly met him, subsequently, at Washington. He was engaged, along with John Jefferson, Dwyer, Mills, and Brown, in a temporary establishment, the manager of which had invited Mrs. Wood and myself to a short star engagement. The company was sufficiently strong to present a few plays creditably, but could not have afforded either a suitable recompense or scene for his remarkable and finished powers. On the benefit night of Mrs. Wood and me, our final night at Washington, Jefferson roused himself to an effort which astonished us. Though now grown old and dispirited, and with a theatre very different from the one which had formerly inspired his efforts, his performance of Sir Peter Teazle in 'The School for Scandal,' and of Drugget, in 'Three Weeks After Marriage,' was nearly equal to his finest and This was the last time we ever met. early efforts. understood, that, after this, he became engaged with a company at the town of Harrisburg, Pa., and appeared occasionally. Of course any theatrical company must have been small and very imperfectly established in such a village. Many and severe domestic afflictions were added to his bodily sufferings, and, worn out with physical and mental distress, he there closed his pure and blameless life. . . . . There never was at any time, on any subject, the least estrangement

between Jefferson and myself. On the contrary, our personal, not less than our professional, intercourse was for thirty years or more an unbroken circle of regard and pleasure. It remained so to the end of it. . . . . Nobody of just feelings could know Jefferson as long and intimately as I knew him, and have any estrangement with him about anything; for he was a man at once just, discreet, unassuming, and amiable. . . . . As a citizen little was known of him. Studious and secluded in his habits, and surrounded by a numerous family, he had neither the wish nor leisure for general society. A few select friends and the care of his children occupied the hours hardly snatched from his professional duties. He felt an unconquerable dislike to the degradation of being exhibited as the merry-maker of a dinner party,\* and sometimes offended by his perseverance on this point. He was frequently heard to observe that for any dinner entertainments there were plenty of amateur amusers to be found, without exhausting the spirits and powers of actors who felt themselves pledged to reserve their best professional efforts for the public who sustained them. To an excellent ear for music, he added no inconsiderable pretensions as a painter and machinist. Incapable alike of feeling or inspiring enmity, he passed nearly thirty years of theatrical life in harmony and comfort. It is painful to contrast those with the misfortunes of his later years, the result of the miserable schemes of amateur direction in our theatre, which ended in its total breaking up

<sup>\*</sup> This was also true of his contemporary and associate, Francis Blissett, and the same trait shows itself in the character of Jefferson the Fourth. — W. W.

and in sending upon the world, in their old age, almost the whole body of its long settled and respectable company.

'Hard was his fate, for he was not to blame.

There is a destiny in this strange world

Which oft decrees an undeservéd doom —

Let schoolmen tell us why.'"

One of the best existing descriptions of Jefferson as an actor is contained in the following passage from Wemyss:—

"Joseph Jefferson was an actor formed in nature's merriest mood - a genuine son of Momus. There was a vein of rich humor running through all he did, which forced you to laugh, despite of yourself. He discarded grimace as unworthy of him, although no actor possessed a greater command over the muscles of his own face or the faces of his audience, - compelling you to laugh or cry, at his pleasure. His excellent personation of old men acquired for him, before he had reached the meridian of life, the title of 'Old Jefferson.' The astonishment of strangers at seeing a good-looking young man pointed out in the street as Jefferson, whom they had seen the night previous at the theatre, tottering apparently on the verge of existence, was the greatest compliment which could be paid to the talent of the actor. His versatility was astonishing - light comedy, old men, pantomime, and occasionally juvenile tragedy. Educated in the very best school for acquiring knowledge in his profession, . . . Jefferson was an adept in all the trickery of the stage, which, when it suited his purpose, he could turn to excellent account. He was the reigning favorite of the

Philadelphia Theatre for a longer period than any other actor ever attached to the city, and left it with a reputation all might envy. In his social relations he was the model of what a gentleman should be, — a kind husband, an affectionate father, a warm friend, and a truly honest man. He died at Harrisburg, where he had been playing at his son's theatre, but no stone marks the spot where moulder the remains of one of the brightest ornaments of his profession. 'Alas, poor Yorick!'"

This was published in 1848, and the statement as to Jefferson's grave was, no doubt, made from memory, and without verification. The neglect thus regretted had, in fact, been reverently repaired. Jefferson was buried in the grounds of the Episcopal church at Harrisburg, in the rear of the building; and there, in 1843, a memorial stone was placed over him by Judge Gibson\* and Judge Rogers, of the Supreme Court of Pennsyl-

<sup>\*</sup> JOHN BANNISTER GIBSON. — This name is distinguished as that of a jurist of high ability and rank. He was a native of Pennsylvania, born in 1780, being the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Gibson, who was killed in battle with the savage Indians, in St. Clair's expedition against them, in 1791. He was admitted to the bar in 1803, and subsequently was several times elected to the State legislature. In 1813 he was appointed presiding Judge of one of the judicial districts of Pennsylvania, and in 1816 he became Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of that State. In 1827 he became Chief Justice, succeeding Judge Tilghman. He was deprived of his seat in 1851, when a change in the Constitution of Pennsylvania made the judiciary an elective institution, - an impolitic, foolish, and pernicious arrangement whenever and wherever adopted. He was, however, elected an Associate Justice in the same year. He died in Philadelphia in 1853, having been eminent on the bench for forty years. An elequent eulogy on him was delivered by Chief Justice Jeremiah Black, which may be found in the seventh volume of Harris's Pennsylvania State Reports. - W. W.

vania. The inscription on this tablet, written by Judge Gibson, is as follows:—



BENEATH THIS MARBLE

ARE DEPOSITED THE ASHES OF

### JOSEPH JEFFERSON:

AN ACTOR WHOSE UNRIVALLED POWERS

TOOK IN THE WHOLE RANGE OF COMIC CHARACTER,

FROM PATHOS TO SOUL-SHAKING MIRTH.

IS COLORING OF THE PART WAS THAT OF NATURE — WA

His coloring of the part was that of nature, — warm, pure, and fresh;

BUT OF NATURE ENRICHED WITH THE FINEST CONCEPTIONS OF GENIUS.

HE WAS A MEMBER OF THE CHESTNUT STREET THEATRE, PHILADELPHIA,

IN ITS MOST HIGH AND PALMY DAYS,

AND THE COMPEER
OF COOPER, WOOD, WARREN, FRANCIS,
AND A LONG LIST OF WORTHIES

wно,

LIKE HIMSELF,

ARE REMEMBERED WITH ADMIRATION AND PRAISE.

HE WAS A NATIVE OF ENGLAND.

WITH AN UNBLEMISHED REPUTATION AS A MAN,
HE CLOSED A CAREER OF PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS,
IN CALAMITY AND AFFLICTION,
AT THIS PLACE,
IN THE YEAR 1832.

"I knew him Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest; of most excellent fancy."

There is an authentic tradition that the clergyman who read the burial service of the Church of England over the remains of Jefferson, knowing that he had been an actor, and stupidly disapproving of that circumstance, actually altered the text of the ritual, substituting the phrase "this man" for "our deceased brother," in the solemn passage beginning "Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, in his wise Providence, to take out of this world the soul of our deceased brother, we therefore commit his body to the ground - earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." This proceeding, which was observed at the time, and which can only be viewed as a petty act of bigotry and profanation, done with deliberate intent to cast a sort of ecclesiastical indignity upon the dead, has been remembered by the descendants of the noble and blameless person whose dust was thus assailed. The present Joseph Jefferson, whose spotless character and beneficent life are their own sufficient praise, is not a member of the church. It is by acts like this, with which its history has often been sullied, that the church has suffered the alienation of thousands of as good and true hearts as ever lived.

After resting nearly forty years, the remains of Jefferson the Second were removed from the Episcopal churchyard to the Harrisburg cemetery, and again laid in the earth. The same stone which marked their first sepulchre marks now their final place of repose. This disturbance of them was compelled, through the conversion of a part of the churchyard into a building plot. In the absence of the present Jefferson, the removal to

a temporary lodgement was effected by Attorney-General Brewster and Senator Cameron, of Pennsylvania; but on returning from abroad, Jefferson personally adjusted this matter, and supervised the final burial.

A Philadelphia writer, whose name is unknown, gives this glimpse of the personal appearance of the old comedian: "He was scarcely of medium height, not corpulent, elderly, with clear and searching eyes, a rather large and pointed nose, and an agreeable general expression. But never was a human face more plastic. His natural recognition of each personage in the mimic scene, his interest in all that was addressed to him, the plan or purpose of what he had to say, his coaxing, quizzing, wheedling, domineering, and grotesque effects, were all complete without the utterance of words; yet it was said that in these particulars he never twice rendered a scene in precisely the same manner. In singing, his voice was a rich baritone, and in speech it was naturally the same. He was so perfect an artist that, although always faithful to his author, he could, by voice or face or gesture, make a point at every exit."

Jefferson the Second resided for many years in a modest house at No. 10 Powell Street, Philadelphia. This is still standing, but a change in the enumeration of the houses in that street has made it number 510. In company with Jefferson the Fourth, the present writer visited this house, in September, 1880. Upon Mr. Jefferson's saying that his grandfather once lived there, the occupants courteously invited us to enter, and we passed a little time in the rooms on the second floor, which the comedian distinctly remembered as

associated with his ancestor. He recalled having been held up at the front window, a child in his grandfather's arms, to watch the heavy raindrops pattering in the pools of water in the street below, — which drops the old gentleman told him were silver pieces, and said he should presently go down and pick them up. This anecdote, told then and there, seemed very suggestive of the kind, playful nature always ascribed to "Old Jefferson."

There was a strong personal resemblance between President Jefferson and the comedian, and this indication confirmed their mutual belief that they had sprung from the same stock. They were friendly acquaintances, and occasionally met; but the actor, who shrunk with honorable pride from even the appearance of courting the favor of the great, was always shy of accepting the attentions of the President. A book had appeared, written by an Englishman, in which it was asserted, in a spirit of ridicule, that the President of the United States, while in the morning he would write State papers and attend to the affairs of the nation, could at night be always seen at the theatre, with a red wig on his head, bowing his thanks for the applause that he got while making the people laugh in a farce. This was sufficiently childish satire, and it is not to be supposed that any person seriously regarded it. Yet the barb underlying it was not wholly without its effect on the sensitive nature of the comedian. He entertained a profound respect for the Republican ideas of his adopted country, and for the exalted office of its chief magistrate; and this, conjoined with the self-respecting dignity of his character, made him extremely punctilious

as to all social intercourse outside of his own class and rank. The President and himself were not able to trace their positive relationship, but both believed it to exist, although the ancestry of the former was Welsh, while that of the latter was English. The actor, however, said that his gratification in their alliance would be marred if the matter were made known, as an avowal of it might be misunderstood. President Jefferson, on one occasion, presented to the actor a court-dress, as a mark of his respect and admiration. highly valued by the recipient, and was left by him to his son Joseph (Jefferson the Third), who also inherited Garrick's Abel Drugger wig. These relics formed part of the wardrobe intrusted by Jefferson the Third to Joseph Cowell, and by him stored in the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, which - as mentioned in a previous chapter - was burnt and destroyed, with all its contents, on Sunday night, March 13th, 1842.

One of the biographers of President Jefferson describes that remarkable man in language which might almost equally well apply to the great actor who was his contemporary: "He was a tender husband and father, a mild master, a warm friend, and a delightful host. His knowledge of life, extensive travels, and long familiarity with great events and distinguished men rendered his conversation highly attractive to mere social visitors. His scientific acquisitions and the deep interest which he took in all branches of natural history made his society equally agreeable to men of learning. Many such visited him, and were impressed as deeply by his general knowledge as they were by the courtesy of his demeanor."

The American Republic to which Jefferson emigrated was, of course, very different from the Republic of today. It contained but sixteen of the States which now compose it, together with the District of Columbia; and, the entire population of the country was less than five millions. This was in 1795.\* The city of New York, as late as 1807, contained scarcely more than 80,000 Jefferson made his advent during the second term of the presidency of Washington, and, living through the terms of Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and J. O. Adams, died in the first term of Jackson. There is room for much reflection, by the student of theatrical history, on the changed conditions under which the dramatic profession is now pursued, as contrasted with the circumstances that surrounded the actors of Jefferson's time.

It is the privilege of the biographer now to present a compendium of personal recollections of her father and other relatives, furnished to him by ELIZABETH JEFFERSON (Mrs. Chapman-Richardson-Fisher), the daughter of Jefferson the Second. They were written in the form of rough memoranda, styled "Notes from Memory," and they were found to require editorial revision. The present writer, accordingly, with the permission of the venerable lady who has thus graciously obliged him with these reminiscences, has carefully paraphrased her narrative, — preserving her facts, strictly adhering to the spirit of her statements, and, wherever possible, using her words. Mrs. Fisher, now a resident of St. John's,

<sup>\*</sup> The American period surveyed by this biography is eighty-six years, — from 1795 to 1881. — W. W.

Newfoundland, is upwards of seventy years of age (1881), and is one of the last remaining ties that link the present period to a most intellectual epoch in the history of the American stage. Her life, of which an account is furnished in the next chapter of this memoir, has been one romantic tragedy, teeming with honor, but marred with a succession of calamitous misfortunes. Her recollections are as follows:—

#### REMINISCENCES OF ELIZABETH JEFFERSON.

"My father was genial and social, but quiet and reserved in manner. He never allowed theatrical matters to be discussed in his presence; not from any dislike of his profession, but because his life was so entirely wrapt up in it that he needed relief from reference to the subject of his constant study and thought.

"Hodgkinson was most liberal to my father in professional business, and in a very little time after they came together gave up to him the low-comedy parts. This soon made him a leading feature of the John Street Theatre, and a great favorite with the public. One night, when it chanced that his first child was very ill, he had gone to the theatre much depressed, though not apprehensive of bereavement. While dressing himself for a farce, he received news that his child was dead. The love of children was a ruling passion with my father, and to lose his own and (then) only one, was an overwhelming grief. Hodgkinson went before the curtain to state the reason of the delay

that had been caused by this news, and to beg of the audience to allow another farce to be substituted for the one announced; but the whole house rose, and, with a cry of 'No farce!' left the theatre. This was an unusual compliment.

"Considerations of economy were among the reasons that induced my father to remove from New York to Philadelphia, where his name became a household word. No man ever held more esteem and affection than followed him. His wife lived but in him; his children idolized him; his servants worshipped him; his nature was one that inspired not only respect but love; his fondness for children was extreme, and I have seen our parlor at home filled with little ones, — children of neighbors, whose names even he did not know, — but they flocked around him as if he were something more than mortal, and he never tired of amusing them. A great tease he was to them — but they preferred to be teased by him, rather than petted by others.

"There was a simplicity in our household that I have seldom met with since. In affairs of business my father would often take us all into his council. One instance of this, which is singular and amusing, I particularly recall. A neighbor of ours was in the habit of lending money at interest, — a proceeding which we had been taught to regard as almost as bad as robbery, — and a merchant of Philadelphia, who was in need of money, had come to him to borrow it. The usurer chanced to be insufficiently supplied, and he mentioned this exigency to my father, saying that a certain very high rate of interest could be obtained upon a loan.

My father answered that he would consider the proposition, and communicate his decision on the morrow. He then called a family council and apprised us of his opportunity to profit by usury. He dwelt long and earnestly on the merchant's distress. We all exclaimed in horror against the idea. I vividly remember the impression I received that he was about to become a Shylock, and that he might be tempted to end by cutting a pound of flesh from the breast of the impoverished debtor. But we kept our father from that shocking crime, which, of course, he had not dreamed of an intention to commit, and blessed him that he was not a Shylock. His quiet, waggish way of enforcing a moral lesson was to be realized afterward in memory. I do not suppose that there ever was a man who lived more entirely unspotted from the world (James i. 27).

"In matters relative to the stage he was scrupulously careful and thorough. His wigs were, with a few exceptions, invented and made by himself. He hit upon the idea of a wig that should be practicable — the hair upon it rising at fright. He had undertaken a part in a piece entitled "The Farmer,"\* but not being particularly struck by it, he set about the study of what could be done to strengthen it. It was then that he hit upon the expedient of making the wig do what the part was unqualified to accomplish, and he was richly repaid by the laughter of the audience. I was present, and I remember hearing the people all around me saying, 'Now look at Jefferson's wig,' in a certain scene of the piece; and, indeed, this comic wig saved the play.

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Farmer." A musical farce, in two acts. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1787. — W. W.

"His varied talent was strained to every line of acting, except tragedy. On one occasion Mrs. Wood, \* the leading lady of the Chestnut Street Theatre, and wife of the manager (William B. Wood), was joking with him, saying that he had mistaken his calling, and that his forte was tragedy, and she persuaded him to play for his benefit Old Norval, in the Rev. John Home's tragedy of 'Douglas.' I have heard him declare that he really intended to act this part seriously, but he said that the audience had been so accustomed to laughing whenever he appeared that they would not accept him soberly, and when he made his entrance in this tragic character, he was greeted with a perfect yell of laughter. He tried to be solemn, but it was of no use. The spectators had determined to laugh at Jefferson, and laugh they did. Mrs. Wood always said that he did something on the sly to provoke the laughter, but he would not acknowledge this. I suspect him, though - for his sentimental acting, as it occasionally occurred in comedy, was touching and beautiful.

"After my father's death, when I was alone in this part of the world (New York), I was requested to give permission for the removal of his remains from Harrisburg to Philadelphia, where it was said a monument should be erected to his memory. But, knowing what sorrow he had suffered at the neglect he received in Philadelphia, towards the end of his career, and know-

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;January 30th, 1804. Married by the Rev. Dr. Abercrombie; Mr. W. B. Wood, to Miss Juliana Westray, both of this theatre." — Wood's Personal Recollections, p. 101.

ing also his aversion to all disturbance of the grave, I refused to sanction this proceeding. His ideas were peculiar as to death. When I wished him to see my mother, after she was dead, he would not be persuaded. 'How can you ask me,' he said, 'to turn with disgust from a face which for so many years has been my pride and my pleasure?' And until a year before his death he never saw a corpse. The first and only dead face he ever looked on was that of his son John. His wish was to be buried in a village churchyard, with no stone to mark the place. But this, it seems, could not be, for two of his old friends, judges of Pennsylvania, erected a stone at his head, in Harrisburg, where he died.

"I never but once saw my father out of temper: and, indeed, he could not have borne to be so; his naturally equable temper was essential to his health. During Mr. Wemyss's\* stage management of the Chestnut Street Theatre (1827–30), that gentleman went abroad to try to engage a company that in fact was not wanted. Among other importations that he brought back was Mr. John Sloman, a comic singer, together with his wife, as stars. Mr. Sloman was a good comic singer, but as an actor was execrable. In my father's con-

<sup>\*</sup> Francis Courtney Wemyss (1797–1859), author of the "Theatrical Biography," previously cited. In chapter xiii. of that work Mr. Wemyss refers to this subject, as follows: "We proceeded as usual to Baltimore for the spring season, and while there I was taken one morning by surprise, by an offer from Mr. Warren to accept the acting and stage management of the theatres under his direction; to cross the Atlantic, and recruit his dramatic company by engaging new faces from England. . . . I therefore, on the 6th of May, 1827, made an engagement for three years with Mr. Warren. . . . On the 20th of June I sailed from Philadelphia." — W. W.

tract with the theatre it was expressly stipulated, and had been so for years, that all plays or farces in which he was desired to appear should be sent to him, so that he might choose his part. This arrangement seemed to hurt the self-love of some of the actors; but, as it was a rule, Mr. Wemyss did not attempt to break it. Nevertheless, after Mr. Sloman had made a hit with his comic singing, Mr. Wemyss harbored the idea that the American public would accept him also as an actor; and so all the new pieces that came from England that season were given to Sloman, on the pretext that he was a new star, and that they were his own property. My father made no protest, feeling sure that neither Mr. Wemyss nor Mr. Sloman could depose him from his place in the public regard. On an occasion of Mr. Warren's benefit, Sloman volunteered his services, and my father was to act in a new farce. I was in the green-room that day, and I never shall forget my father's face when he saw the announcement. This proclaimed, first, a five-act tragedy; then six successive songs by Sloman; then a farce for Sloman; and, finally, his own feature, 'The Illustrious Stranger.'\* Mr. Wemyss happened to enter the room at this moment. My father said to him, very quietly, 'Good morning, sir; that bill must be changed.' 'Why, Mr. Jefferson,' he replied, 'it is impossible: we could not have new bills printed by night.' 'I don't care what you do,' answered my father; 'I want the order of

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Illustrious Stranger, or Married and Buried." Musical farce, in two acts. By James Kenney. Drury Lane, 1827.—W. W.

those pieces changed. I have spent time and thought upon my part, and, damn it, sir, I won't have it wasted.' The manager's face was a picture. An oath from the lips of Jefferson frightened us all; but his farce was placed immediately after the tragedy, and I remember that it was a success. I never heard my father use a profane word, except on that occasion.

"The Chestnut Street Theatre was now declining in prosperity. Mr. Warren (my uncle) was soon declared insolvent. This new company, which his stage-manager (Mr. Wemyss) had engaged, was to have raised the theatre to the highest pinnacle of success; but it proved, as sensible observers had feared, the ruin of the house.\* My father's benefit, always good before this, now turned out a failure. Edwin Forrest, then the rising star, chanced to be acting at the Walnut. On my father's benefit night the opposition managers had put up Forrest's name for a benefit, and the young favorite proved the success. While we were sitting that day at dinner, a letter was brought from Forrest, stating that the writer had not been aware of the employment of his name to oppose that of the elder actor, and that he hoped the blame might be laid where it was due; and he offered to give my father a night, whenever he might choose to name the time, to prove his respect and appreciation. My father deemed the young actor somewhat presumptuous in taking so much for granted; but a few hours sufficed to teach him the

<sup>\*</sup> The instructions to engage this company emanated from Mr. Warren himself, of whose plans Mr. Wemyss was only the executor, not the originator. — W. W.

bitter lesson of waning popularity. On the night of that last benefit in Philadelphia, he made up his mind to leave that city and never return to it.

"At a later time, when my father was acting and managing in Washington, Forrest came there as a star, and he then actually refused one night's emolument. He had said that he would play one night for Jefferson, and he insisted on keeping his word. The money was sent after him when this was discovered, but he returned it, and positively refused to receive it. Efforts were made, from time to time, to induce my father to return to Philadelphia. Forrest's brother, at the Walnut, made him a most liberal offer, without conditions. Wemyss also came, offering anything. But this was in vain. The heart and the pride of the actor had been wounded to death. He never went back, and he soon died.

"Of all my father's children the most talented was John. He was the pride of our family. A classical scholar, proficient also in the modern languages, a clever artist, an accomplished musician, a good caricaturist, an excellent actor, he was one of the most talented men of his day. Playing seconds to my father, he had caught his thoroughness of style without becoming a servile imitator. He was a good singer and a graceful dancer. He possessed every attribute essential to an actor. But his attractive disposition and his brilliant talents soon gave him an exacting and perilous popularity. Gay company, and the dissipation that it caused, injured his health, though to the last he never was known to fail in professional duty. The last performance he ever gave was in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. When my





customed to act with him, and in less than a year he, too, went to his long rest.

"My nephew, Joseph Jefferson (Rip Van Winkle), bears a striking resemblance to my father. He was a wonderfully precocious child: all who remember his childhood say this. When little more than two years old he gave an imitation of Fletcher, the statue man, and it was indeed an astonishing feat. mother chanced to notice the child in a corner of the room trying this experiment, and she called him to her side, and found that he had got all the "business" of the statues, though he could not have pronounced the name of one of them. She made him a dress, similar to that worn by Fletcher, and he actually gave these imitations upon the stage when only three years old.\* Rice came to Washington to sing his Jim Crow songs, and little Joe caught them up directly, and, in his baby voice, sung the songs, although he could not correctly pronounce the words that he sung. His taste for drawing and painting showed itself at an early age. My father could not keep his drawing-box away from the boy. Joe was in his fourth year when my father died. The old gentleman idolized him. I remember his almost daily salutation would be, 'Joe, where's my paint?' 'It's gone,' said the child. 'Yes, sir, I know it's gone; but where? where?' 'Him lost,' was Joe's reply. 'Yes, sir, I know it's lost and gone; but how and where?' The boy would look up, roguishly, and say, 'Him hook um'; and then his grandfather would

<sup>\*</sup> At this age (three) he made his first appearance, having been taken on, at the Washington Theatre, as *Cora's* child, in "Pizarro." — W. W.

prophesy what a great artist that child would one day become, and say that he was 'the greatest boy in the world,' and let him destroy any amount of anything he chose. The inheritance of talent was never more clearly shown than in the case of the present Joseph Jefferson: his habits, his tastes, his acting, all he is and does seems just a reiteration of his grandfather."

NOTE. - A few omissions of essential annotation in the foregoing chapter are repaired here. - Richard Suett died in 1805, at a ripe age. The date of his birth is not recorded. Anecdotes of him may be found in Bernard's "Retrospections." Charles Lamb says that "Shakespeare foresaw him when he framed his fools and jesters." - C. S. Powell, the Boston manager, died in Halifax, in 1810. S. Powell, his brother, died in Boston, April 8th, 1821, aged sixty-three. - The old Chestnut Street Theatre was situated in Chestnut Street, next to the west corner of Sixth Street. Warren, the manager, lived at No. 12 (now 712) Sanson Street, and that was the birth-place of William Warren, of the Boston stage. - Mrs. Wilmot, originally Miss Webb, was first known as Mrs. Marshall. She came over from England in 1792, with Marshall, and both were speedily accepted as favorites. Mrs. Marshall was reputed the best chambermaid actress of her time. "A pretty little woman," says Dunlap, "and a most charming actress in the Pickles and romps of the drama." She was much admired by Washington. She returned to England, left Marshall, wedded Wilmot, came back to America, and here died. - James Fennell, the tragedian, was born in London, Dec. 11, 1766; made his appearance on the American stage in 1794; was excellent in Zanga and Glenalvon; lived a wild life, and wrote an "Apology" for it; and died in Philadelphia, a pitiable imbecile, in 1816. - William Francis, 1757, 1826, was a superior representative of old men in comedy, such as Sir George Thunder. - Thomas Abthorpe Cooper, a great tragic actor, and one of the most admired gentlemen of his day, was born in 1776, and died in 1849. His grave is at Bristol, Pennsylvania. - A fine portrait of Jefferson the Second, as Solus, may be found in the Wemyss collection of theatrical portraits. - "The Woodman's Hut" is a melo-drama, by Samuel James Arnold, son of Dr. Arnold, the musician, first produced at Drury Lane, April 12th, 1814. - "Zem-

buca" is a melo-drama, by Isaac Pocock, first produced March 27th, 1815, at Covent Garden. Emery and Liston were in the first cast. -"The Green Man" is a three-act comedy by Richard Jones, light comedian, first produced August 5th, 1818, at the Haymarket. -In "The Tempest," at Boston, in 1795, Mr. Jefferson acted Mustachio, a sailor mate This part is one of several interpolations, made by Dryden and Davenant, in their version of Shakespeare's comedy, acted at Dorset Gardens, and published in 1670. A sister to Miranda, a sister to Caliban, and a youth who has never seen a woman, are among the persons introduced. This piece was long in use, but ultimately gave place to John Philip Kemble's adaptations, made in 1789 and 1806. Garrick made an opera of "The Tempest"; so did Sheridan; and there is a rhymed version of it by Thomas Dibdin. - WILLIAM WAR-REN (see Dedication, and page 56), made his first appearance on the stage, in 1832, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, enacting Young Norval, in Home's tragedy of "Douglas." He subsequently led a roving theatrical life, in the West, and at length settled in Buffalo, where he was a favorite comedian, in Rice's Eagle Theatre. From there he went to Boston, in 1846, and for twenty weeks was at the Howard Athenæum, under J. H. Hackett's management. In August 1847, he joined the Boston Museum, with which theatre he has ever since been connected, and where he has acted almost all the chief parts, of their day, in the lines of low and eccentric comedy and old The finest Touchstone on the stage of this period - grave. quaint, and sadly thoughtful behind the smile and the jest - an admirable Polonius, great in Sir Peter Teazle, and of powers that range easily from Caleb Plummer to Eccles, and are adequate to both extremes of comic eccentricity and melting pathos, this comedian presents a shining exemplification of high and versatile abilities worthily used, and brilliant laurels modestly worn. - W. W.

#### JEFFERSON THE SECOND AND FRANCIS.

"My next excursion was to Alexandria, where I completed my engagements under the direction of Messrs. Francis and Iefferson. I cannot reflect on the conduct of these gentlemen without comparing it with my own: nothing has impeached their characters during their residence in the United States. but much has occurred to exalt them. No instability has marked their dispositions; with steady industry, perseverance, and prudence, they have attached themselves closely to the profession they had chosen and the city which was originally their promised land, and in which they are now (1813) in happy possession of competency and respect; - the one, the friend and protector of the orphan; the other, the father of a numerous family, under the guardianship of himself and his amiable consort, well educated and well instructed. Neither one nor the other entered this new world (they will pardon the remark) with the advantages I possessed, nor has either of them received a fourth part of the sum of money that I have, from the patronage of Americans. What, then, has made them rich? Prudence. What has reduced my state? Imprudence. Jefferson! the amiable father of an amiable offspring; Francis! the protector of the unprotected, permit me to offer you, poor as it is, my homage." - An Apology for the Life of Fames Fennell, pp. 418, 419.

# ELIZABETH JEFFERSON.

[Mrs. C. J. B. FISHER.]

"We are a queen (or long have dreamed so), certain The daughter of a king." SHAKESPEARE.



## ELIZABETH JEFFERSON.

THE reminiscences of this lady have been incorporated into the sketch of her father, and it will not be amiss to supplement them with some account of their author. Elizabeth Jefferson was born in Philadelphia. about the year 1810, and in the spring of 1827, when seventeen years of age, was brought out at the Chestnut Street Theatre as Rosina, in "The Spanish Barber." \* She had a lovely voice, and had been carefully instructed and trained in music; but her timidity and inexperience on the first night marred her efforts, and this appearance was accounted a failure. Cowell, who preceded Wemyss in the stage management of the Chestnut, when Warren and Wood dissolved their partnership, in 1826, had the superintendence of this début, and he has left this record of it, in his "Thirty Years," Vol. II. p. q: —

"During this season, 1826–27, I had the gratification of introducing two of the 'fairest of creation,' as candidates for histrionic fame — a daughter of Old Warren, and a daughter of Old Jefferson. They were cousins, and about the same age. Hetty Warren had decidedly

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Spanish Barber." Comedy, with songs, by George Colman. Haymarket, 1777. Taken from "Le Barbière de Seville," by P. A. C. de Beaumarchais. — W. W.

the best of the race for favor at the start, but Elizabeth Jefferson soon shot ahead, and maintained a decided superiority. Poor girls! They were both born and educated in affluence, and both lived to see their parents sink to the grave in comparative poverty. Hetty married a big man named Willis — a very talented musician — much against the will of her doting father; and, like most arrangements of the kind, it proved a sorry one. Elizabeth became the wife of Sam Chapman, in 1828. He was a very worthy fellow, with both tact and talent in his favor, and her lot promised unbounded happiness."

Wemyss, who saw this first appearance, gives concurrent testimony as to the attempt and its results, in the thirteenth chapter of his "Theatrical Biography":

"For the benefit of Mr. Jefferson, whose name was sure to fill the house, his daughter, Miss E. Jefferson, made her first appearance upon any stage as Rosina, in 'The Spanish Barber.' If Miss Warren was the best débutante I had ever seen, Miss Jefferson was decidedly the worst. She spoke so low, and so completely lost all self-possession, that, had it not been for her father, she would scarcely have escaped derision. The only redeeming point was her song of "An old Man would be Wooing," in which she was feebly encored. From such an unfavorable beginning little was to be expected. But, in the race commenced between Miss Warren and herself, although distanced in the first attempt, she soon outstripped her rival in her future career, rising step by step, until she became, as Mrs. S. Chapman, the leading actress of the American stage, in the Park Theatre

of New York, justly admired by every frequenter of the theatre."

After this dull beginning Miss Jefferson put forth her energies with redoubled exertion, and - at the Chestnut, and in those wandering theatrical expeditions with which her renowned father felt constrained to close his professional career — she soon acquired the experience essential to her success. Thus equipped she came forward at the Park Theatre, New York, on September 1st, 1834, in the character of Ophelia; and here she was almost immediately accepted as an actress of the finest powers and the foremost rank. She had in the mean time been married, in Philadelphia, to Mr. Samuel Chapman, a young and clever actor, who seems to have been a favorite with "Old Jefferson"; but he had died \* shortly after their marriage, and she was now a widow. The bills announced her as Mrs. S. Chapman. The stock company in which she took her place included Messrs. John K. Mason, H. B. Harrison, John H. Clarke, John Jones, Peter Richings, Henry Placide, W. H. Latham, John Fisher, T. H. Blakeley, William Wheatley, Thomas Placide, Gilbert Nexsen, J.

<sup>\*</sup> Samuel Chapman. — "The Reading mail stage, with nine male passengers and the driver, was stopped by three foot-pads, a few miles from Philadelphia, in the middle of the night. . . . Chapman, who was extremely clever at dramatizing local matters, took a ride out to the scene of the robbery, the better to regulate the action of a piece he was preparing on the subject, was thrown from his horse, and slightly grazed his shoulder. He had to wear that night a suit of brass armor, and, the weather being excessively hot, he wore it next his skin, which increased the excoriation, and it was supposed the verdigris had poisoned the wound. At any rate, he died in a week after the accident." . . . — Cowell's Thirty Years, Vol. 2d, chapter 9th.

Povey, — Russell, and — Hayden, together with the lovely Mrs. Gurner, Mrs. Wheatley, Mrs. Vernon, Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Durie, Mrs. Archer, and the Misses Turnbull. J. W. Wallack acted Hamlet, to open the season, and in its course Sheridan Knowles appeared in a round of his own characters. Mrs. Chapman's success was uncommonly brilliant. "No actress who ever preceded or followed her on the Park stage," says Mr. Ireland, "excelled her in general ability, and she was the last stock actress attached to the establishment fully competent to sustain equally well the leading characters in the most opposite walks of the drama. Devoid of stage trickery, artless, unaffected, and perfectly true to nature, not beautiful in feature, but with a countenance beaming with beauty of expression, in whatever character cast she always succeeded in throwing a peculiar charm around it, and in making herself admired and appreciated. Her performance of Julia, in 'The Hunchback,' first stamped her reputation as an artist of the highest rank. Her engagement was a continued triumph, and her retirement from the stage, in the spring of 1835, on her marriage with Mr. Richardson, a source of deep and earnest regret."

The marriage to which Mr. Ireland thus refers was contracted with Mr. Augustus Richardson, of Baltimore. Cowell mentions him, as "a clever young printer," whom he met, in company with Junius Brutus Booth, at Annapolis, in 1829. Mr. Richardson, like his matrimonial predecessor, died suddenly, and in consequence of an accidental fall; and his widow, returning to the stage, was again seen at the old Park. She sub-

sequently went into the South, joining her brother (Jefferson the Third) and other relatives and connections; and, after her brother's death, in 1842, she managed for a time the theatre at Mobile; and at this place, in 1849, she was married to Mr. Charles J. B. Fisher, whose death, in 1859, aged fifty-four, left her again a widow. These bereavements were not her worst afflictions. One of her sons was murdered in New Orleans, and another (Vernon by name) became insane from a fall, and, after lingering for many years in abject lunacy, expired in an asylum. Her own death is stated, in Brown's "History of the American Stage" (p. 310), to have occurred in 1853, but this was an error. A strong will, an intrepid spirit, and a magnificent constitution, have sustained her to the present time in patience and steadfast industry. For many years this lady has been a teacher of music; and one of her daughters - Miss Clara Fisher, bearing the name of her famous aunt, now Mrs. Maeder - has been favorably known on the New York stage as a vocalist. Charles J. B. Fisher's first appearance on any stage was made at the Mobile Theatre, in 1842, as Dazzle, in "London Assurance"

The musical style of Elizabeth Richardson was based on that of the beautiful Garcia (Mme. Malibran), whom she saw at the New York Park Theatre in the season of 1825, having been sent over from Philadelphia expressly to observe and study this incomparable model. When only eleven years of age she was elected an honorary member of the "Musical Fund Society," of Philadelphia. John Sinclair, the famous vocalist, father of the

lady who became the wife of Edwin Forrest, repeatedly said that he considered her the best singer in America, and more than once offered her a star position in his musical company. Had she but adhered to either the lyric or dramatic stage, and resisted the allurements of ideal domesticity, there is no limit to the eminence she might have reached. Long before she came to the Park Theatre, Henry J. Finn, the comedian, had assured Edmund Simpson, the manager, that she was beyond all rivalry as a comedy actress; and Finn had already offered her the leading business, on her own terms, at the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans. Tyrone Power had also spoken of her with unstinted admiration. Edwin Forrest, in whose "support" she had acted at Washington, declared her to be the best tragic actress on the stage: "She is the best Lady Macbeth we have," he said, "and the only Pauline." Somebody asked Simpson one day how he had happened to hear of her as an actress. "I have heard of nobody else for two years," answered the manager - to whom, indeed, it seemed that the Admirable Crichton had come again, in petticoats. During the Park engagement of Sheridan Knowles she acted in all the pieces produced for him, — "The Hunchback," "William Tell," "Virginia," "The Wife," etc., - and the famous author was fascinated with her loveliness and her genius. Ever afterward, in writing to her from England, he addressed her as Lady Julia Rochdale, and signed his letters "Your father, Walter." It was as Julia that she made her first hit at the Park; and her popularity there was so great that every omission of her name from

the bill would cause a serious depression in the receipts. Yet this actress was only a member of the stock company, receiving a salary of \$30 a week; and the receipts from her farewell benefit performance were only \$882. She was the original, in America, of many of the first and finest characters in comedy, vaudeville, and burlesque — of Fulia, in "The Hunchback," Pauline, in "The Lady of Lyons," Marianne, in "The Wife," Gertrude, in "The Loan of a Lover," Bess, in "The Beggar of Bethnal Green," Lydia, in "The Love Chase," Eliza, in "The Dumb Belle," Lissette Gerstein, in "The Swiss Cottage," Gabrielle, in "Tom Noddy's Secret," Perseus, in "The Deep, Deep Sea," Oliver Twist, in the play of that name, made from the novel by Charles Dickens, and Smike, in "Nicholas Nickleby," from the same author. Among her other characters were Amina, Rosina, Cinderella, Vettoria, in "The Knight of the Golden Fleece," Madame de Manneville, in "Married Lovers," Therese, in "Secret Service," Esmeralda, in "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," Mrs. Lynx, in "Married Life," Mrs. Bud, in "My Wife's Mother," Mimi, in "The Pet of the Petticoats," Helen Worrett, Myrtillo, in "The Broken Sword," Maria, in "Of Age To-morrow," and Fenny, in "The Widow's Victim." The complete list of her representations would fill many pages. Her range extended from Lady Macbeth to Little Pickle, and she was excellent in all that she attempted. Time makes a sad havoc with beauty and fame. In other years, when this lady walked in Broadway, her footsteps were followed by the admiring glances of hundreds of worshippers. To-day her slight and faded figure, draped in its garments of grief, flits by unnoticed in the crowd. It would be difficult to point to a career which better illustrates than this one the mutability of human happiness and worldly fortune and the evanescent character of theatrical renown.

# JEFFERSON THE THIRD.

1804-1842.

"He is insensibly subdued
To settled quiet: he is one by whom
All effort seems forgotten; one to whom
Long patience hath such mild composure given
That patience now doth seem a thing of which
He hath no need."

"He is retired as noontide dew
Or fountain in a noon-day grove;
And you must love him ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love."
WORDSWORTH.



### JEFFERSON THE THIRD.

This was an uneventful life, and the story of it takes the form of a tribute to singular beauty and worth of personal character rather than of a narrative of achievements that concerned the world. Joseph Jefferson, the third of this line of actors, was born at Philadelphia, in 1804, and in that city he received his education and grew to manhood. While a boy he did not evince a taste for the stage, but preferred the study of architecture and drawing; and this he pursued diligently and with success. In these branches, and also in painting, he was instructed by Coyle,\* an English scenic artist of repute at that period. There is no positive record of his first appearances upon the stage, but it is remembered that he sometimes played little parts, such as the First Murderer in "Macbeth," while yet a youth. His name appears on the play-bills of the Chestnut Street Theatre as early as 1814, and it is known that when finally he had adopted the dramatic profession he made himself a good actor in the line of old men. In 1824 he was a member of the dramatic company of the Chat-

<sup>\*</sup> ROBERT COYLE was killed by an accidental fall from a wagen, his horse having suddenly started in fright. A performance for the benefit of his widow occurred at the Bowery Theatre, New York, August 22d, 1827. — W. W.

ham Garden Theatre, New York, under the management of Mr. Henry Barriere. This company comprised Henry Wallack, Geo. H. Barrett, Thomas Burke, Alexander Simpson, W. Robertson, Henry George Moreland, John A. Stone (who afterwards wrote "Metamora," etc.), A. J. Allen, W. Anderson, C. Durang, Spiller, Somerville, Williamson, Collins, and Oliff (once prompter at the old Park, and whose descendants are now (1881) esteemed residents of Castleton, Staten Island), with Thomas Kilner for stage-manager. The ladies were Mrs. Entwistle (who had been Mrs. Mason, and who became Mrs. Crooke), Miss Henry (afterwards famous as Mrs. G. H. Barrett), Mrs. Caroline Placide Waring, Mrs. T. Burke, Mrs. Walstein, Mrs. C. Durang, Mrs. H. Wallack, Mrs. Kilner, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Spiller, Mrs. P. M. Clark, and Miss Oliff. The theatre was opened that season (its third) with "The Soldier's Daughter" and "Raising the Wind," and the casts of the night, May 17th, set Jefferson's name against the characters of Woodley and Fainwould. His acting on this and subsequent occasions was thought to give a promise of excellence. He did not long remain in New York, but went back to Philadelphia; and there, and in Washington, Baltimore, and the region round about, pursued, discursively, his theatrical labors. In 1826, at the age of twenty-two, he was married to Mrs. Thomas Burke, whom he had first met at the Chatham Garden Theatre, and who was eight years his senior. This was a "love-match," and the marriage proved exceptionally happy and fortunate. After his father quitted Philadelphia, in 1829-30, he managed for the old gentleman, in

Washington, Lancaster, Harrisburg, and other cities, and he remained with him till the last. During the season of 1831-32 he managed the theatre in Washington. During the seasons of 1835-37 he was connected, successively, with the Franklin Theatre, at No. 175 Chatham Street, New York, and with Niblo's Garden. At the Franklin he was scene-painter as well as actor. "Mobb the Outlaw, or Jemmy Twitcher in France" ("Robert Macaire"), was given there, on May 2d, 1836, with new scenery by him. On May 25th he acted King Arthur, in the travestie of "Tom Thumb." On June 1st "The Hunchback" was performed for his benefit, with his sister Elizabeth as *Yulia*, and with his wife in the bill, for a song. The latter had been absent about ten years from the New York stage, and it was now observed that her voice and person had been impaired by the ravages of time. On March 1st, 1837, Jefferson took another benefit, the programme comprising "The Lady of the Lake," "The Forty Thieves," and a vaudeville entitled "The Welsh Girl," in the latter of which pieces he represented a personage styled Sir Owen Ap Griffith. Mrs. Jefferson appeared as Blanche of Devon, and as Morgiana. Charles Burke, her son, then a lad of fifteen, took part in the exercises, singing a song entitled "The Beautiful Boy." Jefferson the Fourth, then eight years old, was present at this performance. For a few weeks, during the summer of 1837, Jefferson and John Sefton managed a vaudeville company at Niblo's, and produced musical farces. Mrs. Harrison, Mrs. Bailey, Mrs. Knight, Mrs. Gurner, Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Watts, Mrs. Maeder (Clara

Fisher), Mrs. Richardson, Miss Jane Anderson, Alexina Fisher (afterwards Mrs. Lewis Baker), and Miss De Bar (afterwards Mrs. J. B. Booth, Jr.), appeared in this troupe, and the males were Jefferson, Sefton, Plumer, Henry, Th. Bishop, Thayer, Lewellen, Thoman, J. W. Wallack, Jr., Edwin, Latham, and P. Williams. The season ended on September 16th, 1837, and that proved Jefferson's farewell of the New York stage. He proceeded with his family to Chicago, there joining his brother-in-law, Alexander Mackenzie; and the rest of his career - made up of much wandering and many vicissitudes — was accomplished in the West and South, through an exceedingly primitive period of the American theatre. He seldom met with prosperity, but he seems to have possessed the true Mark Tapley temperament, and his spirits always rose when his fortunes were at the worst. He was manager, actor, scenepainter, stage-carpenter, - anything and everything connected with the art and business of the stage. He understood it all, and in every relation that he sustained toward it he was faithful, thorough, and adequate to his duties. The dramatic chronicles give but little attention to his proceedings; yet they bear one concurrent and invariable testimony to his personal charm, winning simplicity, and intellectual and moral worth. His trials were bravely met; his hardships were patiently borne; and, to the end, he labored in steadfast cheerfulness and hope, making good use of his talents and opportunities, and never repining at his lot.

"The father of our Rip Van Winkle," writes the veteran manager, John T. Ford, "was one of the most

lovable men that ever lived. He acted occasionally, painted almost constantly, and when he had a theatre, as sometimes happened, he managed his business with that careless amiability, almost amounting to weakness, that was inseparable from his nature. Once, when he was managing in Washington, he was so poor that, wanting Edwin Forrest to act there, he had to walk to Baltimore, forty miles, and did so, to solicit him. He enjoyed life, in a dreamy way, and his only anxiety was for his children."

Another kindly picture of him is afforded in the following remarks by his sister Elizabeth: "My brother Joe was a gentle, good man, true and kind in every relation of life. He was very like his father, - so much so that, in the play of 'The Exile,' \* where the latter had to dance in domino, Joe would often, to save his father the trouble, put on the dress and dance the quadrille, and no spectator could tell the difference, or was aware of the change of persons. He was fond of his fireside, serene in adversity, humble in prosperity, affectionate in temperament, and beloved by all who knew him. Painting was his great passion. He became a very good actor in old men. He was an inveterate quiz. I have seen him, - when he was manager as well as actor, — after making some sort of a mistake on the stage, fix his composed and solemn gaze magisterially upon some one of the supers, till the poor fellow came really to think that the blunder had been made by himself, and trembled lest he might be at once discharged. Joe

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;The Exile, or The Desert of Siberia." Musical Play, in three acts. By Frederic Reynolds. Covent Garden, Nov. 10th, 1818, — W.W.

married Mrs. Burke, who was a great singer. No voice that I ever heard could compare with hers, except, possibly, that of Parepa. My father feared that, as Joe was so much younger than his wife, the match might not turn out well; but there never was a happier marriage. Indeed, it could not be otherwise; for Joe was all sunshine, and she loved him, and that says all."

Ireland speaks of Jefferson as "admirably costumed and skilfully made up, appearing at times the living portrait of his father"; but intimates that, as an actor, he did not fulfil the promise of his early efforts. The truth is that he was a quiet, unobtrusive, unambitious gentleman; and the fact that he did not take a high rank in the public estimation was mainly because he did not care to make the essential effort. His philosophic, drifting, serene disposition is aptly illustrated in this incident. An old friend of his, hearing that he had met with great misfortune in business, and, in fact, become bankrupt, called at his dwelling to cheer him, and was told by Mrs. Jefferson that her husband had gone a fishing. He expressed surprise, and, with some vague apprehension that all might not be well, went down to the river in search of him. The object of his solicitude was soon found, sitting composedly in a shady nook on the bank of the Schuylkill, humming a pleasant air, and sketching the ruins of a tumble-down mill on the opposite shore. Cordial greetings exchanged, the sympathetic visitor could not conceal his astonishment that a crushing misfortune should be accepted so cheerfully. "Not at all," said Jefferson; "I have lost everything,

and I am so poor now that I really cannot afford to let anything worry me."

A few of the characters that were acted by Jefferson the Third are specified in the subjoined list:—

Polonius. In the unconsciously humorous sapience and halfsenile prolixity of this part he was exceptionally excellent.

Sir Robert Bramble, in "The Poor Gentleman."

Dogberry, in "Much Ado About Nothing."

Crabtree, in "The School For Scandal."

Admiral Franklin, in "Sweethearts and Wives."

Mr. Coddle, in "Married Life."

The First Witch, in "Macbeth."

King Arthur, in "Tom Thumb."

M. de Villecour, in "Promotion, or the General's Hat."

First Grave-Digger, in "Hamlet."

Raff, in "The Conquering Game."

Naudin, in "Tom Noddy's Secret."

Baron Vanderbushel, in "The Sentinel."

John Bull, in Colman's comedy of that name.

Gratiano, in "The Merchant of Venice."

Baptisto, in "The Hunter of the Alps."

Reef, in "Ambrose Gwinett." Melodrama. By Douglas Jerrold.

Tapwell, in "A New Way to Pay Old Debts."

Stanon, in "The Blind Boy." Play. By William Dunlap. Altered from Kotzebue.

Sentinel, in "The Wandering Boys." By M. M. Noah.

Spinosa, in "Venice Preserved." Tragedy. By Thomas Otway. 1682.

Duke of Norfolk, in Cibber's version of Shakespeare's "Richard the Third."

Sentinel, in "Pizarro."

Memno, in "Abællino."

The latter piece was a conspicuous example of the "wretched Dutch stuff" that Mr. Dunlap's actors so

properly despised. In later days, at the Chatham Garden Theatre, it gave an occasion for a facetious exploit by Jefferson the Third and his comrades, to the discomfiture of an actor named Andrew Jackson Allen, who was "the veritable Guy" of the company. This performer was a manufacturer of patent leather ornaments for stage dresses; and it was he who once astonished Edwin Forrest by the emphatic inquiry, "I should like to know what the h --- your Richard the Third would amount to without my spangles?" Allen was partial to the play of "Abællino," and on the occasion named he had chosen it for his benefit night. Its closing situation presents the whole dramatis persona on the scene, and, at a critical moment, they all are to exclaim, "Where is Aballino?" But Jefferson's mischievous plan had arranged that when this moment should come the entire company should stand immovable and speechless. Aballino, his head darkly muffled in his cloak, for a while awaited the word. At last he was heard to mutter, several times, "Somebody say 'where 's Abællino!'" There was no response, and the house was already in a titter. The dilemma was finally broken by Allen himself, who loudly cried out, "If you want to know where 's Aballino, here he is" - and threw off his disguise, amid shrieks of laughter.

In Cowell's "Thirty Years" there is a passing glimpse of Jefferson the Third in his last days. Cowell had repaired to Mobile after the conflagration of the St. Charles Theatre, New Orleans, in 1842, and he refers to the theatre which he there joined, — a property owned by James H. Caldwell, leased that year to Messrs.





De Vendel and Dumas, and managed for them by Mr. Charles J. B. Fisher, brother to Clara Fisher, the famous and popular actress. Cowell says: "Charles Fisher, being very desirous of proving his friendship for the Jefferson family, engaged all the immediate descendants of 'the old man' now alive, and as many of the collateral branches as were in want of situations. Mrs. Richardson had been in Mobile the season before, and therefore she was the nucleus around whom were clustered her two sisters and their husbands, Messrs. Mackenzie and Wright, her brother Joseph and his two very clever children, and her niece Mrs. Germon and husband. The company, in consequence, was literally a family, with the exception of James Thorne and myself, Mrs. Stewart, Morton, and Mr. and Mrs. Hodges: so that when poor Joe Jefferson died the theatre had to be closed two nights; for without the assistance of the chief mourners we could not make a performance." \*

Jefferson's death occurred, suddenly, at Mobile, Alabama, at midnight on Thursday the 24th of November, 1842. He died of yellow-fever, and his remains were buried on the 25th. His grave is in Magnolia Cemetery, at Mobile (Square number 6, Lot number 32), and it is marked by a white marble headstone inscribed

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;OLD JOE COWELL was an envious man, who looked on the actions of his fellow-men with an eye of sarcasm, and was ready at all times to pick a flaw in, and to turn to ridicule, their best efforts."—

Ludlow's Dramatic Life. This is found to be true in reading Cowell's book, for the spirit of the writer clearly shines through his words. Nevertheless, he affords an occasional detail, or tint, that is of advantage to this picture of the Past. — W. W.

with his name, the date of his death, and the number of his years. He was only thirty-eight. The stone to commemorate him was erected in 1867 by his son Joseph, and at the same time a wooden grave-mark, which had originally designated the spot (the sole tribute that poverty then permitted filial reverence to offer), was brought away by him and buried in the earth at his country-seat in Hohokus, New Jersey.

The subjoined reflections upon the death of Jefferson were published, at the time of its occurrence, in the "Mobile Advertiser": "When the man of wealth and station pays that debt which neither high nor low can repudiate nor delay, he seldom lacks a eulogist to descant on his posthumous virtues, though undiscovered until his death, while humble excellence rarely lives beyond the circle of affectionate friendship. Mr. Joseph Jefferson was the second son and namesake of that distinguished comedian so many years the pride and ornament of the Chestnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, whose unblemished private life was a moral sanction for his public reputation; and never did the unostentatious virtues of a father more purely descend upon his offspring than in the person of the deceased. He was an actor of great talent, and an artist of unquestioned excellence. Though living in the public world, it was not there that his true merit was seen; and one who has known him many years, in every relation of life, may be permitted to say that, as a son, a brother, a father, a husband, and a friend, he has left none purer to lament his death or attest his virtues. Guileless as a child, he passed through life in perfect charity to all mankind, and

never, by his nearest and dearest, was he known to utter an unkind word or entertain an illiberal opinion.
... His blameless nature was as free from a thought or act of dishonor as the diamond is free from alloy; and, though a stranger among us, there are many sorrowing hearts in distant parts of this his native land who will promptly indorse this testimony."

Note. - Careful search for a portrait of Jefferson the third has not been rewarded. A silhouette likeness of him, and of his wife, is all that could be found. A water-color portrait of him, made by a Philadelphia artist, named Wood, was long in existence. It was in a circular frame, marked with Masonic emblems. It disappeared, about forty years ago, with other possessions of the family, in a western city. Jefferson was an uncommonly handsome man, self-contained, placid, and singularly interesting. With the person, the manners, and the serene and gentle temperament of an Addison, this actor was, in his quiet way, an inveterate wag. This ideal is the strongest image of him that lives in memory, and many anecdotes are told, to give it proof. On an occasion, at the Washington Theatre, the play of "Tekeli" was presented, under Jefferson's management, with a melodramatic actor named Dan Reed as the hero. Reed was a large man, tall and formidable, wore a tremendous wig of black hair, and spoke in tones of thunder. On this occasion he was very drunk; so that, when the first curtain fell, Jefferson thought it best to withdraw him from the performance. There was a stage-struck tailor in the theatre, the keeper of the wardrobe, a little man with a small round head, entirely bald. This person, seeing his opportunity, offered himself as a substitute for the stalwart and vociferous Reed, - and the occasion instantly became one that Jefferson could not resist. He seized Reed's wig, stuck it on the bald head of the tailor, and, without a word of explanation to the audience, sent him on for the second act. The business requires that, at this juncture, Tekeli shall be discovered, apparently dead, lying upon a bier;

and that he presently shall leap up, alive and well, with a fine flourish of exultation. The little tailor rose to the occasion,—springing suddenly into a defiant attitude, and squeaking out, in a thin, shrill voice, "Hi ham Teakaylee!" At the same instant the great shaggy wig dropped from his pate, and revealed that object, hairless, and shining like a soap-bubble,—while a deep voice from the gallery, improving the ensuing moment of startled silence, quietly ejaculated, "Great Gosh, what a head!" It is needless to add that the audience fairly yelled with laughter. Jefferson's enjoyment of the scene, would, naturally, have been profound.

"By sports like these are all their cares beguiled—
The sports of children satisfy the child."

W. W.

#### CHARLES SAINT THOMAS BURKE.

1822 - 1854.

"Upon my word, thou art a very od! fellow, and I like thy humor extremely." — FIELDING.

"With all the fortunate have not —
With gentle voice and brow:
Alive, we would have changed thy lot —
We would not change it now." — MATTHEW ARNOLD.



### CHARLES BURKE.

It is the concurrent testimony of judicious actors and play-goers who remember this extraordinary young man that he was pre-eminently possessed of genius in the dramatic art; but his life was so brief, his health so delicate, his temperament so dream-like and drifting, and his fate in general so unfortunate, that he neither made his rightful impression upon his own epoch, nor left an adequate memory to ours. Charles Saint Thomas Burke (deriving the name of Saint from his god-father, and that of Thomas from his mother) was a child of the marriage of Thomas Burke and Cornelia Frances Thomas, and was born in Philadelphia, March 27th, 1822. When three years old he was introduced upon the stage, being utilized in a line of infantile parts, after the fashion of theatrical families in those days; and from that time onward he was devoted to a theatrical career. As a boy he was exceedingly apt and intelligent. He saw, and he could in some measure appreciate, the acting of Jefferson the Second, and of John and Thomas Jefferson, his connections, - not to speak of other worthies of the Chestnut Street Theatre, - and in that good school he was nurtured and trained. In the summer of 1836, when in his fifteenth year, he

came out at the National Theatre, New York, as the Prince of Wales, in "Richard the Third." The elder Booth was acting Gloster. Later in the season the boy was seen as Prince John, in "Henry IV.," and as Irus, in "Ion," - the former play having been produced for Hackett (as Falstaff), and the latter for George Jones, subsequently known as "The Count Joannes." Burke also occasionally sung in public, and he was esteemed wonderfully clever in comic vocalism. Long before this time his mother had married Joseph Jefferson (the Third); and when, at the end of 1837, his step-father removed from New York into the West, Burke was taken there, along with the rest of the family, and he shared the vicissitudes and hardships of the wandering life which ensued, — at first in the dramatic company formed by Jefferson and his brother-in-law Alexander Mackenzie, and afterwards with Sol. Smith and others. He was not seen again in New York till 1847, when, on July 19th, he appeared at the Bowery Theatre, acting Ebenezer Calf, in "Ole Bull," and Dickory, in "The Spectre Bridegroom." Here he remained about a year, and thoroughly established himself as a local favorite. In the summer of 1848 he joined his friend Chanfrau, at the New National Theatre, formerly the Chatham, which was opened on August 14th, that year, with Burke as acting-manager; and with this house he was connected, during its regular seasons, till the summer of 1851. There is a record of his having appeared at Burton's Theatre, in the spring of 1849, as Billy Bowbell, in "The Illustrious Stranger": but Burton was jealous of him, as a probable rival in popularity, and

subsequently used effective influence to exclude him from the theatres of the West Side; \* and the result of this successful hostility was that Burke was banished to the Bowery, and that ever since he has commonly been named, not, as he should be, with Finn, Burton, Blake, Twaits, Blissett, Warren, and Jefferson, but with comic artists of the more common quality of Barnes, Gates, Sefton, and Hadaway. The last three years of Burke's life were mainly spent in professional travel. Ludlow saw him in St. Louis in his latter days, and Edwin Booth and David Anderson entertained him at their ranche in California in 1852-53. He worked hard, and found favor and made friends; but he met with scant prosperity, and he suffered from failing health and waning spirits. His last appearance on the stage was made where his professional life began, - at the Chestnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia. This happened on February 11th, 1854; and the last character that he per-

<sup>\* &</sup>quot;It was said that Burton, jealous of Burke, and of his successes in some of the parts which Burton had made his own, and in which life could not endure the idea of a rival, was the cause of Burke's banishment from Broadway to the East side of the town. Burton was believed to be financially interested, in 1849, with Mr. E. A. Marshall in the Broadway Theatre, although his name does not appear in the bills of that date, and it was said to be a part of his contract with Marshall that Burke should have no engagement at the house during Marshall's management. . . . Burke never succeeded, after that date, in getting a position in a West side theatre, but played his unhappily too few engagements in New York to the audiences of the Bowery, where he was immensely popular. . . . He is, perhaps, quite forgotten, except by his own friends, and the few old play-goers who cling to the memories of the palmy days of the last generation; but by these 'Poor Charly Burke' is still remembered for his many good qualities as actor and man." - Laurence Hutton's Plays and Players (1875), chapter xiv.

sonated was *Ichabod Crane*, in "Murrell, the Land Pirate." He was twice wedded, but left no children. Both his marriages were unfortunate. His first wife, Margaret Murcoyne, a native of Philadelphia, born in 1818, died in that city in 1849. His second, Mrs. Sutherland, survived him, but has since passed away. Both these ladies were on the stage. The latter was the mother of Ione Sutherland, who adopted her stepfather's name, and, as Ione Burke, had a brief theatrical career, terminating in marriage. She is now residing in retirement in England. Charles Burke died in Leonard Street, New York, November 10th, 1854, in the thirty-third year of his age, and was buried in the same grave with his mother, in Ronaldson's Cemetery at Philadelphia.

The testimonials which exist, to the loveliness of Burke's character, and to the strength and versatility of his genius, are touched equally with affection and tender regret. "He grew up," writes Elizabeth Jefferson, "to be one of the best actors we ever had. As a boy he was full of promise; and when, after fifteen years, I saw him act in Mobile I was struck with what seemed to me a revival of the old time. A more talented and kind-hearted man than Charles Burke never lived." His old comrade Chanfrau speaks in the same strain: "He was a great actor and a true man. One cannot say too much of his talents and his worth. He could do many things in acting, and was wonderful in all that he did."

In person Burke was tall, slender, and extraordinarily thin; and his long, emaciated figure — agile, supple,





and graceful — seemed expressly made for queer comic contortions and grotesque attitudes. His countenance was capable of great variety of expression, ranging from ludicrous eccentricity to painful sadness, and he had it under such complete control that it responded, instantly and exactly, to every changing impulse of his mind and feelings, so that he had a new face for every part that he played. The boys of the Bowery pit firmly believed him to be the original of the long-legged figure on the comic almanac. In the course of thirty years many parts were acted by this versatile player. These are a few of them, suggestively indicative of his attributes and artistic affinities: —

#### PARTS ACTED BY CHARLES BURKE.

Touchstone, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Slender, Dromio, Launce, The First Gravedigger, Launcelot Gobbo, Marrall, Baillie Nicol Jarvie, Dr. Ollapod, Zekiel Homespun, Bob Acres, Moses, The Mock Duke Jacques, Grandfather Whitehead, Mark Meddle, and Caleb Plummer.

Dickory, in "The Spectre Bridegroom." Farce. By W. T. Moncrieff. Drury Lane, 1821.

Ebenezer Calf, in "Ole Bull." Farce.

Billy Lackaday, in "Sweethearts and Wives."

Clever, in "Woman's Wit." Acted under the name of "Slander." Play. By Sheridan Knowles.

Stitchback, in "Hofer, the Tell of the Tyrol."

Rip Van Winkle, in a drama on that subject, by himself.

Splash, in "The Young Widow."

Grumio, in "The Taming of the Shrew."

Solon Shingle, in "The People's Lawyer." Farce. By Dr. J. S. Jones.

Horsebeam Hemlock, in "Captain Kyd." Drama First acted

at the Park, in 1839, with Peter Richings as Robert Lester, alias Kyd, Mrs. Richardson as Kate, and Charlotte Cushman as . Elspy.

Ichabod Crane, in "Murrell the Land Pirate, or the Yankee in Mississippi." Drama. By Nathaniel Harrington Bannister (1813–1847), author of about one hundred plays.

Iago, in a travestie of "Othello."

Billy Bowbell, in "The Illustrious Stranger."

. Mesopotamia Jenkins, in "The Revolution." Play. By Charles Burke. Bowery, 1847.

Cloten, in "Cymbeline."

Ensign Jost Stoll, in "Jacob Leisler, or New York in 1690." Historical drama. By Cornelius Matthews. Bowery Theatre, 1848.

Isidore Farine, in "The Pride of the Market." Mary Taylor acted with Burke, as Marton.

Clod Meddlenot, in "The Lady of the Lions." Burlesque.

Captain Tobin, in "The Mysteries and Miseries of New York." By H. P. Grattan. Based on a story by "Ned Buntline" (E. C. Z. Judson).

Mr. McGreedy, in a burlesque, by himself, satirizing the great tragic actor, W. C. Macready.

Paul Pry, in the comedy of that name, by John Poole.

Toby Veck, in "The Chimes." Drama. Based on the Christmas story of that name, by Charles Dickens.

Caleb Scrimmage, in "Jonathan Bradford, or the Roadside Murder."

Darby, in "The Poor Soldier." Comic opera. By John O'Keefe. Covent Garden, 1793.

Mettaroarer, in "The Female Forty Thieves." Burlesque. In this part Burke gave a comic imitation of Edwin Forrest, as Metamora.

Deuteronomy Dutiful, Selim Pettibone, and Timothy Toodles.

An instructive article by L. Clarke Davis, published in "Lippincott's Magazine" for July, 1879, entitled "At and After the Play," incidentally shows Burke as

dramatist and actor, embodies a pleasing reminiscence of him by that delightful humorist and comedian John S. Clarke, and places Burke and Jefferson before the reader in their sacred relation of affectionate brotherhood. Burke made his own version of "Rip Van Winkle," and acted *Rip*. Mr. Davis comments on the subject, as follows:—

"Burke's play follows closely the story of the 'Sketch-Book,' and lacks altogether the sweet, tender humanity and the weird spirituality which pervade the combined work of Jefferson and Boucicault: it makes nothing of the parting from, or the meeting with, the child Meenie; but, much of the dialogue, which was Burke's own, has been wisely retained. The speech containing the notable line 'Are we so soon forgot when we are gone?' is Burke's, not Boucicault's, though Jefferson has transposed and altered it for the better. It is introduced in the original, when Rip, returning to his old home, is told that if he be Rip, and not an impostor, some one of his old cronies will surely recognize him. He answers, 'To be sure dey will! Every one knows me in Kaatskill. (All gather around him and shake their heads.) No, no, I don't know dese peoples - dey don't know me neither; and yesterday dere was not a dog in the village but would have wagged his tail at me: now dev bark. Dere was not a child but would have scrambled on my knees: now dey run from me. Are we so soon forgotten when we are gone? Already dere is no one wot knows poor Rip Van Winkle.'

"We never saw Charles Burke play this part, though we have seen him play many others, and can testify to the greatness of his genius and the perfection of his art. . . . How he spoke that speech we have been told by John Sleeper Clarke, who is so just a man and so free from professional jealousy that he could not, if he would, praise the dead at the expense of the living. Mr. Clarke says that in the delivery of those lines no other actor has ever disturbed the impression that the profound pathos of Burke's voice, face, and gesture created: it fell upon the senses

like the culmination of all mortal despair, and the actor's figure, as the low, sweet tones died away, symbolized more the ruin of the representative of a race than the sufferings of an individual: his awful loss and loneliness seemed to clothe him with a supernatural dignity and grandeur which commanded the sympathy and awe of his audience. Mr. Clarke played Seth with Mr. Burke for many consecutive nights, and he relates that, on each succeeding night, though he was always aware of what was coming, even watching for it, when those lines were spoken his heart seemed to rise in his throat, choking him, and his cheeks were wet with tears; for Burke's manner of pronouncing them was so pathetic that not only the audience but even the actors on the stage were affected by it.

"Mr. Jefferson, remembering how his brother spoke that speech, has adopted a different mode: 'It is possible that I might speak it as he did, but ----' He leaves the sentence unfinished, the reason untold; but it is an open secret to those who know how deep is the reverence of the living Rip for the dead one. They know that there are tones of Charles Burke's voice even which are held in too sacred a memory by his brother ever to be recalled by him upon the stage. In speaking of him, Mr. Jefferson said: 'Charles Burke was to acting what Mendelssohn was to music. He did not have to work for his effects, as I do. He was not analytical, as I am. Whatever he did came to him naturally, - as grass grows or water runs. It was not talent that informed his art, but genius.' Between these half-brothers, Burke and Jefferson, there was a feeling of fellowship stronger than fraternal attachment, - a degree of affectionate devotion, which has passed into a stage tradition; and, as man or artist, Charles Burke has no warmer eulogist than Joseph Jefferson."

The memorials that remain of Burke are few and unsubstantial. Those play-goers who remember a French comedian named Leduc (now dead), who acted at the theatre in 14th Street, New York, now Haverly's Theatre (1881), when "La Grande Duchesse" was first pre-

sented in America, possess at least Burke's likeness. The French actor was one of the company that Bateman brought over from Paris to co-operate with Mlle. Tostée in the introduction of the Opera Bouffe upon the American stage. He acted Prince Paul, and subsequently Menelaus, in "La Belle Hélène." He was of a strangely winning personality. He never obtruded himself. He drifted into and out of the open scenic spaces like a star among the light clouds of a summer night. His art concealed every vestige of effort. was the perfection of grace. And through all the gentle drollery of his seemingly unconscious action there ran a vein of reticent, wistful sensibility, which, without being sadness itself, produced upon others the momentary effect of sadness. It was the fortune of the present biographer very often to see this exquisite actor, with the present Jefferson as a companion spectator, and to enjoy in his acting a prodigious delight - at that absolute thoroughness of dramatic art which is nature at nature's best. Leduc, Jefferson said, was more like Charles Burke than any man he had ever seen. But Burke, he added, had tragic powers, as well as the faculty of humor, and would often astonish his associates and the public, who had been thinking only of his drollery, by some sudden dash into tragic passion, or by a marvellous self-poise in the realm of pathos. Not improbably Burke as an actor had the mental constitution of Hood as a poet, - who, in one mood, could chuckle over the farcical theme of 'Miss Kilmansegg and Her Precious Leg,' and, in another, could melt the heart with 'The Bridge of Sighs,' or awe the fancy with the

sombre image of 'Eugene Aram,' or wake the spirit of regretful dreams with 'Inez,' or thrill the deep foundations of the imagination with the wonderful poetic magic of 'The Haunted House.'

In the days of his prosperity as Mose, Mr. F. S. Chanfrau opened a theatre, in Brooklyn, styled "The Museum," with Charles Burke as stage-manager. On the opening night Burke acted the chief comic part in a new piece, and spoke the tag. Chanfrau, who had been acting elsewhere, hurried thither as soon as his performance was ended, impatient to learn the result of this new venture. That result was failure. The piece had been coldly received, and all Burke's efforts had failed to save it. Chanfrau went at once to the stage. The curtain had just fallen. The actors had dispersed to their rooms. Burke alone remained upon the scene. He was standing in the centre front of the stage, exactly where he had stood when the curtain fell. Motionless, with head bowed, with hands clasped, unconscious of all around him, the comic genius stood there in the shadow, with the weight of disaster on his heart, and with the tears slowly running down his face. He could not speak. His sensitive spirit had taken upon itself the blame and the blight of a failure. So, transfigured by loss and sorrow, he stands forever in the pantheon of memory; and round him the withering leaves of autumn fall, and cold winds sigh in the long grasses, and twilight slowly deepens, and the world is far away.

# JEFFERSON THE FOURTH.

RIP VAN WINKLE.

"If he come not, then the play is marred." - SHAKESPEARE.

"It is difficult to render even ordinary justice to living merit, without incurring the suspicion of being influenced by partiality, or by motives of a less honorable nature. Yet, as what I shall say of this gentleman, whose friendship I have enjoyed for many years, and still possess in unabated cordiality, will be supported by all who are acquainted with him, I am under no apprehension of suffering by the suggestions of malice." — JOHN TAYLOR.

These lines by Wordsworth, written in 1800, entitled "A Character," and found among that great author's "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection," seem singularly applicable to the man who is seen and loved in 'Jefferson's performance of Rip Van Winkle:—

- "I marvel how Nature could ever find space
  For so many strange contrasts in one human face:
  There's thought and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom,
  And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.
- "There's weakness and strength, both redundant and vain;
  Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
  Could pierce through a temper that's soft to disease,
  Would be rational peace,—a philosopher's ease.
- "There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
  And attention full ten times as much as there needs;
  Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy;
  And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.
- "There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare,
  Of shame, scarcely seeming to know that she's there:
  There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
  Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.
- "This picture from nature may seem to depart,
  Yet the Man would at once run away with your heart:
  And I for five centuries right gladly would be
  Such an odd, such a kind, happy creature as he."

## JEFFERSON THE FOURTH.

THE maternal ancestry of the present representative of the Jeffersons is French; and of him, as of Garrick, it is to be observed that the blood of three nationalities flows in his veins. French, English, and Irish were the currents that mingled in Garrick: French, English, and Scotch are the currents that combine in Jefferson. The inquirer finds Jefferson's French ancestry in the Island of St. Domingo. There, about the beginning of this century, living in affluence, upon his plantation, dwelt M. Thomas, a gentleman newly arrived from France. Little is known about him now; but it is remembered, of his character and conduct in later years, that he was a person of winning manners, cheerful fortitude, and resolute mind. had rested for a while in New York, in company with his wife, on their journey from France to St. Domingo to take possession of an inherited estate; and in New York, on October 1st, 1796, was born their daughter, Cornelia Frances. In the next year they were established in their new home, and there they continued to reside till the period of the negro insurrection led by Dessalines. At this crisis they had a narrow escape from murder, in the massacre of the white population by which that revolt was attended. The first rising

of the negroes against the French in St. Domingo occurred in 1791-93, and was succeeded by the temporary government of Toussaint L'Ouverture. The second rising, which resulted in the murder or the expatriation of the French residents, was effected in 1803; and it was then that M. Thomas and his family were in peril. They escaped, however, through the instrumentality of a negro slave, named Alexandre, who - impelled by affectionate fidelity towards his master - gave warning of the impending danger, just as it was close at hand; but it was only by precipitate flight that M. Thomas was able to elude the doom of slaughter which had been pronounced against himself and all his household. He fled by night, and, after many perils, escaped to sea in an open boat, accompanied by his wife and daughter, and by the faithful servant who had thus saved their lives. The fugitives were picked up by an American vessel and carried into the port of Charleston, South Carolina.

M. Thomas was now a poor man, and the rest of his days passed in poverty and labor. At first he attempted a minor shop-keeping industry of some sort; but this did not succeed. His wife soon died, and his little daughter remained his chief care. One day, in a Charleston street, he chanced to meet Alexandre Placide, whom he had known in France, and who welcomed him as an old friend. Placide, famous as an athlete and a rope-dancer, — the father of Henry, Thomas, Caroline, Eliza, and Jane Placide, all known, in later days upon the stage, — was then manager of the Charleston Theatre, and in that institution

M. Thomas found employment. He never, indeed, attempted acting; but his daughter, who at once became a pet with the Placide family, was soon brought forward, in the ballet, at the Charleston Theatre, and presently was intrusted with minor parts in the plays. This was her school, and here she grew up, an actress and a singer, early winning for herself an excellent rank in the profession, — especially as a vocalist, — which she maintained almost to the end of her life.

"Possessing a fair share of ability as a comic actress," says Mr. Ireland, "with a pleasing face and person, and an exquisite voice, — which, in power, purity, and sweetness, was unapproached by any contemporary, — she soon eclipsed all rivalry in vocalism; and, till the more cultivated style of Italy was introduced, was considered the model of all excellence. She was attached to the Park [New York] for two or three seasons, and afterwards removed to Philadelphia, where she became an equally distinguished favorite."

The first husband of Cornelia Frances Thomas was the Irish comedian, Thomas Burke, to whom she was married in her girlhood. Burke was noted for his fine talents and handsome person, and likewise — as this lady afterward had sad reason to know — for his dissipated habits and his gallantry. He was on the Charleston stage — where she first met with him — as early as 1802, and therefore he must have been considerably older than his wife. He first appeared in New York, on April 29th, 1811, at the Park, and subsequently he fulfilled several New York engagements. At a later period he resided in Philadelphia, where he became a favorite with play-goers, as the dashing, devil-may-care

Irishman. His death occurred, from delirium tremens, in 1824, in Baltimore. Wood says he died on June 6th, 1825. However that may be, his demise was a considerable relief to those who were best acquainted with him; and on July 27th, 1826, his widow became the wife of Joseph Jefferson, the Third of the line of actors commemorated in this chronicle.

A pleasant reminiscent glimpse of the mother of Jefferson the Fourth is afforded in the following extract from N. M. Ludlow's "Dramatic Life" (1880):—

"Finding matters so dull in New York (1826), my wife and I went to Philadelphia, to pay a visit to our much-esteemed friend, Mrs. Cornelia Burke, after whom our first daughter was named. We found the lady recently married again, to Mr. Joseph Jefferson, scenic artist, afterwards father of Joseph Jefferson, of Rip Van Winkle renown. . . . Our meeting with this lady was a very pleasant one: we had not seen her since the voyage we made with her to Virginia, from New Orleans, in the summer of 1821. We presented to her the little namesake, then five years of age, who was greatly admired by Mrs. Jefferson and her friends. [Now, 1881, an old lady, married, and residing in the West).

"We passed a very pleasant week in Philadelphia, occasionally visiting Mrs. Jefferson, who was always excellent company herself; and, in addition to this, we often met with very agreeable persons at her house, who were in the habit of visiting her. Mrs. Jefferson was of French parentage. . . . Her first efforts on the stage were in singing characters, such as Rosina, in the comic opera of "Rosina, or the Reapers"; Countess, in "John of Paris"; and Virginia, in "Paul and Virginia," and the like. I remember with much pleasure her singing in those English operas. She performed Blanche of Devon, in the melo-drama of "The Lady of the Lake," on the night when I made my first appearance in Mr. Caldwell's company, in New Orleans, in 1821. She also performed speaking characters very well.

The first time that I remember to have seen her was at Albany (1814-15), in the character of Susan Ashfield, in "Speed the Plough"; on the occasion when I made my clandestine appearance as Bob Handy's Servant, and was complimented on it by Mr. (Thomas) Burke."

Mr. and Mrs. Burke had one son, Charles Saint Thomas Burke, who became a great comedian, but died too soon for his own fame and the happiness of his generation.

Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson had four children, two of whom died in infancy, while two have survived to the present day:—

- 1. JOSEPH JEFFERSON. This is Jefferson the Fourth Rip Van Winkle.
- 2. CORNELIA JEFFERSON. This lady was born in Baltimore, Md., October 1st, 1835, and went on the stage in childhood, performing in the travelling company of which her parents were members, at Chicago, Galena, and other places in the West and South, after the year 1837. She accompanied her relatives, in their various professional wanderings, during the next twelve years. On May 17th, 1849, she appeared in New York, at Chanfrau's National Theatre, acting Little Pickle, in "The Spoiled Child." In 1857 and 1858 she was connected with the dramatic company of Laura Keene's Theatre, and she was last seen on the New York stage, at this house, after it had become the Olympic - being the second of that name. This appearance was made in the autumn of 1867, as Titania, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream." The Olympic, which had been started by Mrs. John Wood, in 1863, was at this time managed by Mr. James E. Hayes (obiit in N. Y. May 7th, 1873), for his father-in-law, Mr. John A. Duff. Since then Cornelia Jefferson has been living, in retirement, in Philadelphia. She visited England in 1877. She is now the widow of a Mr. Jackson, and has one son, Mr. Charles Jackson, who has attempted the stage.

The mother of Charles Burke and Joseph Jefferson died, at Philadelphia, in November, 1849, and her grave — which, a few years later, became also that of the former of these sons — is in Ronaldson's Cemetery, corner of Bainbridge and Ninth Streets, in that city. The present writer, in company with Joseph Jefferson, visited this place of rest, not long ago, and found it thickly overgrown with flowering shrubs and climbing roses. A large white stone marks the spot, inscribed "To our mother and our brother, — Cornelia F. Jefferson, Charles Burke."

In this little grave-yard rest other members of the dramatic profession, eminent in their day, and still not forgotten. The magnificent Josephine Clifton, who died in 1846, is buried there, and there was entombed the untimely dust of Samuel Chapman.

The fate of M. Thomas, the old French ancestor of Jefferson the Fourth, was tragically sad. He survived till 1827, living, toward the last, in his daughter's household. During his latter years he was in continual suffering, from hereditary and incurable gout. He bore his agonies patiently, till there came a time when he could bear no more: the constant and deadly tortures drove him to despair. In that condition — frantic with pain, hopeless and miserable — the poor old gentleman drove out, one morning, to the Market Street Bridge, over the Schuylkill River, dismissed his carriage, and, as soon as he was left alone, sprang over the parapet and was drowned.

Joseph Jefferson, the representative American comedian of our time, was born at Philadelphia on the 20th

of February, 1829, in a house which is still standing—unchanged except that a shop has been opened on the ground-floor of it—at the south-west corner of Spruce and Sixth Streets. In childhood he gave many indications of an exceptional mind and character, and of the artistic abilities that were to be developed in his mature years. He was reared amidst theatrical surroundings, and when only four years old was brought upon the stage, at the Washington Theatre, by Thomas D. Rice, the famous delineator of negro character. This comedian, on a benefit occasion, introduced the child, blackened and arrayed precisely like himself, into his performance of *Fim Crow*; and little Joe was carried upon the scene in a bag, by the shambling Ethiopian actor, and emptied from it, with the appropriate couplet,—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I'd have you for to know I'se got a little darkey here, to jump Jim Crow."

An eye-witness of this first appearance,—that admirable actress, Mrs. John Drew, of Philadelphia,—says that the boy instantly assumed the exact attitude of Jim Crow Rice, and sang and danced in imitation of his sable companion, and was a perfect miniature likeness of that long, ungainly, grotesque, and exceedingly droll comedian.

Thomas D. Rice, thus strangely associated with Jefferson, was a remarkable man and had a singular career. He was born in New York City, May 20th, 1808, and died there September 19th, 1860. When a boy he was employed as a supernumerary at the Park

Theatre. Afterwards he went into the West. Cowell met him, at Cincinnati, in 1829, "a very unassuming, modest young man, little dreaming then that he was destined to astonish the Duchess of St. Albans, or anybody else; he had a queer hat, very much pointed down before and behind, and very much cocked on one side." The same writer states that Thomas H. Blakeley was the first to introduce negro singing on the American stage, and adds that Blakeley's singing of the "Coal Black Rose" set the fashion which Rice followed. Wemyss says that the original Jim Crow was a negro, at Pittsburgh, Pa., named Jim Cuff. The veteran actor, Edmon S. Connor, in a talk published in the N. Y. Times, June 5th, 1881, asserts that it was an old negro slave, owned by a man named Crow, who kept a livery-stable, in the rear of the theatre in Louisville, Ky., managed by Ludlow & Smith, in 1828-29, and that this person adopted his master's name, and called himself "Jim Crow." Connor adds: -

"He was much deformed, the right shoulder being drawn high up, the left leg stiff and crooked at the knee, giving him a painful but laughable limp. He used to croon a queer tune with words of his own, and at the end of each stanza would give a little jump, and when he came down he set his 'heel a-rockin.' He called it 'jumping Jim Crow.' The words of the refrain were:—

'Wheel about, turn about,
Do jes so,
An' ebery time I wheel about,
I jump Jim Crow!'

"Rice watched him closely, and saw that here was a character unknown to the stage. He wrote several stanzas, changed

the air somewhat, quickened it, made up exactly like the old negro, and sang to a Louisville audience. They were wild with delight, and on the first night he was recalled twenty times."

Rice went to England in 1836, and was immediately a chief feature in the London theatrical world. He there married a Miss Gladstanes. His profession yielded him a large competence. It was one of his freaks to wear gold pieces on his coat, for buttons; and frequently he was first stupefied with wine, and then robbed of these ornaments. He was a wonderful actor, in such parts as Wormwood, in Buckstone's farce of "The Lottery Ticket," Old Delf, in "Family Jars," and Spruce Pink, in "The Virginia Mummy." He took his hints from actual life, but, like all creative artists, he was an interpreter and not a photographer; and, in that sense, he himself, and not another, was the original of all that he did. The moment any man accomplishes anything that is out of the ordinary track of mediocrity numerous observers are found endeavoring to detract from his merit by impugning his originality. Well and wisely did old Falstaff say that "honor is a mere scutcheon."

The circumstance of Jefferson's Jim Crow debut is referred to, with another anecdote illustrating his precocity, in the "Notes from Memory," by Elizabeth Jefferson, his aunt, already quoted; and William Warren, his second cousin and old comrade, gives a quaint relation suggestive of the same unexpected maturity in childhood. The comedian, Henry J. Finn, going into the green-room, one night, at the Washington Theatre,

dressed for the part he was to act, observed this child, wrapped in a shawl, and sitting quietly in a corner. After various flourishes of action and mimicry, for which he was admirable, he paused in front of the boy, and, not dreaming that such a tiny creature could make any reply whatever, solemnly inquired, "Well, my little friend, what do you think of me?" The child looked at him, with serious, thoughtful eyes, and gravely answered: "I think you are a very wonderful man." Finn was impressed, and perhaps a little disconcerted, by this strange, elf-life quaintness and judicial sobriety of infancy.

In 1837, when eight years old, this little lad is found at the Franklin Theatre, New York, with his parents, and it is recorded that he appeared upon the stage, September 30th, in a sword-combat, with "Master Titus." Young Jefferson, on this occasion, personated a Pirate, while young Titus opposed him in the character of a Sailor; and, at the end of a spirited encounter with swords, the miniature *Pirate* was prostrate upon the earth, and the miniature Sailor bestrode him in triumph. The master Titus who figured in this scene was a bright boy, - the son of an officer at the City Hall of New York, - but his theatrical career was prematurely ended, shortly after this time, by the accidental explosion of a gun, upon the stage, which blinded him. He was acting in "Matteo Falconi," with Mr. W. Sefton, when this disaster occurred. Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson left New York at the end of the year 1837, taking their children with them, - Charles Burke, Cornelia, and Joseph, — and went to Chicago; and for the next twelve years this family led the life of the strolling player, wandering through the West and South, and even following the armies of the Republic into Mexico: so that, until he came forward at Chanfrau's National Theatre, as <code>Fack Rackbottle</code>, in "Jonathan Bradford," — September 10th, 1849, — Jefferson was not again seen in the metropolis. Those intervening twelve years were crowded with vicissitudes and darkened with privation and trouble. But, it is an old story, and proved in the experience of every man who has made a great mark in the world, that

"Who ne'er his bread in sorrow ate,
Who ne'er the mournful midnight hours
Weeping upon his bed has sat,
He knows you not, ye Heavenly Powers!"

Often in those days the youthful Jefferson participated in performances that were given in the dining-rooms of country hotels, without a scrap of scenery, and with no adjunct, to create the illusion of a stage, except a strip of board nailed to the floor sustaining a row of tallow candles. Not the less were these representations given with all the earnestness, force, and thorough care of brilliant and accomplished actors. This kind of experience, indeed, was not uncommon with the children of Thespis, in the earlier times of the American stage, when, as may be read in Ludlow's chronicle, the strolling actors floated in flat-boats down the great rivers of the West, and now and then shot wild beasts upon their banks, and often played in the barns of the friendly or the frugal-minded and acquisitive farmer. Land journeys from town to town were made in wagons, or ox176

carts, or on foot, while cold and hunger not infrequently were the harsh companions of this precarious life. Once the Jefferson company, roaming in a region far from . any settlement, had found a more than commonly spacious barn, and a farmer of more than commonly benevolent aspect, and it was thereupon resolved to give a performance in this auspicious spot. Written handbills, distributed through all the neighborhood, proclaimed this joyful design. There was a good response. The farmers and their wives and children, from far and near, came over the hills to see the play. The receipts amounted to twenty dollars, and this was viewed as nothing less than a godsend by the poor players, who saw in it the means of food and of a ride to the next town. But no commensurate allowance, it turned out, had been made for the hospitality of the genial owner of the barn. "I guess that 'll about pay my bill," he said, as he slipped the total receipts into his pocket; and so this venture was rounded and settled, and the rueful comedians walked away. On another occasion, it chanced that they had hired a wagon to convey them from one town to another, a distance of ten or fifteen miles, in Tennessee, and the driver, after proceeding some distance on the journey, demanded payment of his due; when being told that this would be forthcoming out of the proceeds of their next performance, he turned them from his vehicle, and left them on a forest road in a rain-storm, from which predicament they were rescued, after some hours, by a friendly ox-cart. scenes like these young Jefferson learned his early lessons of an actor's life; and, aside from barely three

months at school which he once enjoyed, this was the only kind of training that he ever received. In Mexico, when the war broke out, in 1845, he was among the camp-followers of the American army, and, with his comrades, gave performances in tents. He saw General Taylor on the banks of the Rio Grande; he heard the thunder of the guns at Palo Alto; he stood beside the tent in which the gallant Ringgold lay dying; he witnessed the bombardment of Metamoras, and, two nights after the capture of that city, he acted there, in the Spanish theatre. It is obvious from even this passing suggestion of the comedian's adventures and vicissitudes that he has worn the gipsy's colors and known the gipsy's freedom; that the world has been shown to him without disguises; and that his nature has been developed and moulded through the discipline of labor, the ministry of sorrow, and the grand and priceless tutelage of experience.

The principal features of the cast of "Jonathan Bradford," in which Jefferson came out at Chanfrau's New National Theatre, in 1849, and which may be cited here as showing by what players and influences he was then surrounded, were as follows:—

Jonathan Bradford . . . . . John Crocker.

Dan McCraisy . . . . Redmond Ryan.

Jack Rackbottle . . . . Joseph Jefferson.

Caleb Scrimmage . . . Charles Burke.

Anne Bradford . . . . Mrs. H. Isherwood.

Sally Sighabout . . . . Mrs. Sutherland.

"In and Out of Place" was also acted, — with Mrs. Charles Mestayer as *Letty*. This lady, formerly Miss

Pray, subsequently Mrs. Barney Williams, was now in the heyday of her buxom vivacity. Miss Gertrude Dawes was connected with the company, as a dancer. In "The Poor Soldier," which completed the bill for this night, Charles Burke appeared as Darby, W. H. Hamilton as Patrick, and Miss Lockyer as Norah. Cupid, also, seems to have been of this party; for Mrs. Sutherland was afterwards wedded to Burke, and Miss Lockyer to Jefferson. The season lasted from September 10th, 1849, to July 6th, 1850, and among the players who appeared at the National during that time, and with whom, accordingly, Jefferson was associated, were Mrs. Muzzy, Mrs. Bowers, and her sister Miss Crocker (afterwards Mrs. F. B. Conway), Mr. Chanfrau, — then famous as Mose, — Wyzeman Marshall, Barney Williams, Harry Watkins, Emily Mestayer, Fanny Herring, and Anna Cruise (afterwards Mrs. W. Cowell). Old Booth acted at the National, in those days; the inveterate wag, Harry Perry, was seen there; Edwin Booth made his first New York appearance on that stage; Joseph Procter there presented his "Nick of the Woods"; John R. Scott displayed there the exuberant melo-drama of the past; the late George L. Fox began his metropolitan career in that theatre; the fascinating Julia Pelby passed across its scene, in "The Child of the Regiment"; Charles Dibdin Pitt displayed his grand figure and plastic art, as Virginius; and Yankee Locke, James H. McVicker, and Jim Crow Rice there let slip the spirits of their humor, and paid their tribute to the rosy gods of mirth. In other quarters Burton, Blake, and Mitchell were the sovereigns

of laughter; Hamblin and Forrest were the kings of tragedy; and John Brougham, Lester Wallack, and George Jordan held the field of elegant comedy, against all comers, and felt, with Alexander, that "none but the brave deserve the fair."

On leaving the National Theatre, in the early Fall of 1850, Jefferson and his wife proceeded to the old Olympic, where they acted in November; and about this time the young comedian applied, but without success, for a position in Brougham's Lyceum, - opened December 23d, that year. He wished to be stagemanager; and, had he been accepted, the fate of that theatre, and the whole after career of the beloved and lamented John Brougham, might have been very different from what they were, - an almost continuous tissue of misfortunes. A little later, in the season of 1851-52, Jefferson was attached to the company of Anna Thillon and the Irish comedian Hudson, who gave musical plays, at Niblo's Garden; and shortly afterwards at this theatre he was associated with Mr. and Mrs. John Drew, William Rufus Blake, Lester Wallack, Mrs. Stephens, Mrs. Conover (now Mrs. J. H. Stoddart), and Charles Wheatleigh. He then formed a partnership with Mr. John Ellsler, and took a dramatic company through a circuit of theatres in the South, visiting Charleston, Savannah, Macon, Atlanta, Augusta, Wilmington, and other cities. After this tour was over he settled for a while in Philadelphia, and then in Baltimore, - first at the Holliday Street Theatre, and then at the Baltimore Museum, where he was manager. In the summer of 1856 he made his first trip

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to Europe, his purpose being to study the acting then to be seen on the London and the Paris stage. On November 18th, that year, the beautiful Laura Keene opened her new theatre, afterwards the second Olympic, at Nos. 622 and 624 Broadway, New York, and Jefferson was soon added to the force, already very strong, of her recruits, - a company that included, among others, George Jordan, Charles Wheatleigh, James G. Burnett, J. H. Stoddart, T. B. Johnston, Charles Peters, Ada Clifton, Mrs. Stephens, Mary Wells, Cornelia Jefferson, and Charlotte Thompson. The second season opened on August 31st, 1857, with "The · Heir at Law," and Jefferson made a strong hit as Dr. Pangloss. On the opening night of the third season he appeared as Augustus, in "The Willow Copse." Charles W. Couldock acted Luke Fielding, Edward A. Sothern Sir Richard Vaughan, and Laura Keene Rose Fielding. Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Blake, Sara Stevens, Effie Germon, and Charles Walcot joined the company this season; and it was now that Blake, - a great actor, but one who had a tendency to "mar all" with his coarseness, - being resentful of Jefferson's invariable and excellent custom of expunging the indelicate lines from the "old comedies," made the vain attempt to stigmatize him as "the Sunday-school comedian." There was a pretty little scene in the green-room, and Blake was discomfited. Well for him it would have been had he heeded the lesson. "You take an unfair and unmanly advantage of people," said Jefferson, "when you force them to listen to your coarseness. They are for the time imprisoned, and have no choice but to hear and

see your ill-breeding. You have no better right to be offensive on the stage than you have in the drawingroom." On October 18th, for the first time anywhere, was presented Tom Taylor's comedy of "Our American Cousin," and this brought the crisis in Jefferson's professional life. He acted Asa Trenchard in this piece, and he was instantly famous. Seldom has an actor found a medium for the expression of his individual nature so ample and so congenial as this part proved to be for the denotement of what was in Jefferson. Rustic grace, native manliness, unconscious drollery, and unaffected pathos, - given forth with a firm artistic control and in an atmosphere of assured repose, - it was on all hands agreed could never before have been so truthfully and beautifully embodied and expressed. The new piece ran for one hundred and forty consecutive nights, - a great run for those days, - and made the success of the year and of the theatre. It was now also that the late Edward A. Sothern, reluctantly accepting the then trivial part of Lord Dundreary, afterwards so much elaborated, laid the foundation of his fortune, his bright career, and his permanent fame.

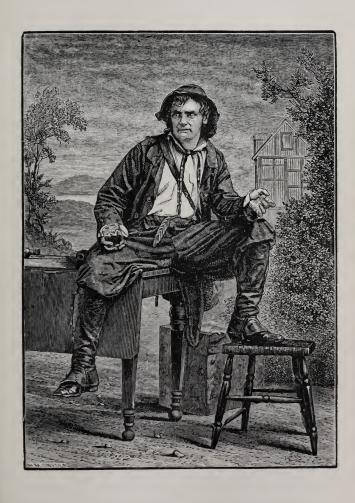
This was the full cast of "Our American Cousin": -

Asa Trenchard	Joseph Jefferson.
Lord Dundreary	Edward A. Sothern.*
Sir Edward Trenchard	Edwin Varrey.
Lieutenant Vernon	Milnes Levick.
Capt. de Boots	. — Clinton.
Coyle	. James G. Burnett.*
Abel Murcot	. Charles W. Couldock.
Binney	Charles Peters.*

<sup>\*</sup> Dead (1881).

The season of 1858-59 at Laura Keene's Theatre lasted till July 14th in the latter year, when Jefferson's relations with her company were ended, and on the 14th of September following he appeared in the dramatic \*company engaged by Dion Boucicault and William Stuart for the Winter Garden Theatre, then opened with Mr. Boucicault's adaptation of "The Cricket on the Hearth." This theatre, originally called Tripler Hall, had been known as the Metropolitan under W. E. Burton's management, and later as Laura Keene's Varieties. Jefferson appeared as Caleb Plummer, and also as Mr. Bobtail; and in the course of the ensuing six months he was seen as Newman Noggs, Salem Scudder, Granby Gag, Sir Brian, and Rip Van Winkle. The first presentation of Mr. Boucicault's powerful drama of "The Octoroon" (December 5th, 1859) was an important incident of this season; and on February 2d, 1860, a new theatrical version of Dickens's novel of "Oliver Twist," made by Jefferson himself, was for the first time presented, — the withdrawal of Mr. Boucicault, who left the theatre suddenly, on a disagreement as to business, having opened the way for the presentment of new attractions. James

<sup>\*</sup> Dead (1881).





W. Wallack, Jr., a glorious romantic actor and one of the most interesting and lovable of men, made an astonishing and memorable success, as Fagin the Jew, and Matilda Heron acted with a wonderful wild power as Nancy. There-were in the Winter Garden company, at one time, Jefferson, Wallack, Jordan, George Jamieson, Harry Pearson, T. B. Johnston, George Holland, A. H. Davenport, J. H. Stoddart, Matilda Heron, Mrs. John Wood, Sara Stevens, Ione Burke, Mrs. W. R. Blake, and Mrs. J. H. Allen. Mr. and Mrs. Boucicault had retired; proceeding to Laura Keene's Theatre, where they remained from January oth to May 12th, 1860. The former here produced for the first time his highly esteemed plays of "The Heart of Mid Lothian" (January 9th) and "The Colleen Bawn" (March 29th). The Winter Garden season, meantime, was still further signalized by the production (Feb. 19th) of Mrs. Sydney Frances Cowell Bateman's play of "Evangeline," — a work based on Longfellow's poem of that name, — in which Miss Kate Bateman began the more mature portion of her professional career, and in which Jefferson acted the humorous character, not much to the author's satisfaction. "It is the best comic part my wife ever wrote," Bateman said; and "It is the worst comic part I ever played" was Jefferson's reply. He withdrew from the Winter Garden in the spring of 1860, and on May 16th opened Laura Keene's Theatre for a summer season, which lasted till August 31st. The pieces presented were "The Invisible Prince," "Our Japanese Embassy," "The Tycoon, or Young America in Japan,"

and "Our American Cousin." Jefferson, Sothern, and Couldock reappeared, acting their original parts, in the latter piece, while Mrs. Wood enacted *Florence*. In Jefferson's dramatic company, at this time, were Mrs. John Wood, Mrs. Henrietta Chanfrau, Mrs. H. Vincent, Ione Burke, Cornelia Jefferson, Hetty Warren, J. H. Stoddart, and James G. Burnett. In those seasons at the Winter Garden and Laura Keene's Theatre the foundations of Jefferson's fame were finished and cemented, and the building of its noble structure was well begun.

Early in 1861 Jefferson's first wife suddenly died; and this bereavement, together with apprehension prompted by his own delicate health, now persuaded him to seek refuge and relief in travel and new scenes. He formed, indeed, at this time the resolution to appear eventually on the London stage, and he planned in substance the exact career which he has since fulfilled. There has not been much of either luck or chance in Tefferson's life; and, though a fortunate man, he is emphatically a man who has compelled fortune by acting upon a distinct purpose, wise ideas, and a decided resolution. At first he proceeded to California, arriving in San Francisco on June 26th, 1861, and on July 8th, immediately following, he made his first appearance in that city. This event occurred at Maguire's Opera House, in Washington Street: and Jefferson's California season lasted till November 4th, that year, when he made his farewell appearance. The next day he sailed for Australia, and in that great country, with its magnificent climate, its beautiful scen-

ery, its progressive civilization, and its brightly intelligent and warm-hearted people, he passed four of the most prosperous and beneficial years of his life. Here he completely recovered his health; and here he won golden opinions, on every hand, for his acting of Asa Trenchard, Caleb Plummer, Bob Brierly, Rip Winkle, Dogberry, and many other characters. gained hosts of friends, too; and among his comrades at this time were B. L. Farjeon, the novelist, - who since then has married his eldest daughter, - Henry Edwards, George Fawcett Rowe, — the best Micawber of our stage, - Louis A. Lewis, the composer, and James Smith, the brilliant editor. One of the notable incidents of his professional life at Melbourne was the success of Rosa Dunn (now Mrs. Lewis), who acted Mary Meredith in "Our American Cousin," Hero in "Much Ado," and kindred characters, and showed herself to be a lovely actress. From Melbourne he proceeded to Tasmania, where - among what Mr. H. J. Byron calls the Tasmaniacs - he met with prodigious favor. His performance of Bob Brierly, on one occasion, at Hobart Town, drew an audience that included upwards of six hundred ticket-of-leave men; and, though at first this anything but light brigade contemplated him with looks of implacable ferocity, they ended by giving him their hearts, in a sort of hurricane of acclamation. Leaving Tasmania, he sailed for Callao, and passed a little time on the Pacific coast of South America, and at the isthmus of Panama. Mr. Dan Symons, well remembered for his piquant acting of Dr. Caius and similar parts, had accompanied Jefferson from Australia, and was thenceforth for a long time the companion of his travels (*Obiit* 1871). At Panama they took passage for England, and on arriving in London the comedian immediately commissioned Mr. Boucicault to revamp the old play of "Rip Van Winkle."

"He asked Boucicault to reconstruct it," writes Clarke Davis, in the "Lippincott" article previously cited, "and give it the weight of his name. Many of the suggestions of changes came from Jefferson, and one at least from Shakespeare. Boucicault shaped them in a week, . . . but he had no faith in the success of his work, and told Jefferson that it could not possibly keep the stage for more than a month. While much of the first and third act was the conception of Burke, part of each was Jefferson's. . . . The impressive ending of the first act is wholly Boucicault's, but the climax of the third - the recognition - is Shakespeare's. . . . In 'Rip Van Winkle' the child struggles to a recognition of her father, while in 'Lear' the father struggles to recognize his child. Compare the two situations, — that of Lear and Cordelia with that of Meenie and Rip, and the source of Boucicault's inspiration will be apparent; and only as Shakespeare is greater than Boucicault is the end of the fourth act of 'Lear' greater than the third act of 'Rip.' It is the most beautiful of all human passions, - the love between father and child, - which informs them both, and which makes them both take hold upon the heartstrings with a grasp of iron. The second act of 'Rip Van Winkle,' which is remarkable as being wholly a monologue, is entirely Jefferson's conception."

The origin of "Rip Van Winkle" as a play is obscure. The story, by Washington Irving, as every reader knows, is contained in his beautiful "Sketch Book," which was published in 1819. Bayard Taylor mentions the legend as of remote German origin.

Hackett produced "Rip Van Winkle," at the old Park Theatre, New York, on April 22d, 1830; and probably Hackett was himself the author of the version that he produced. Charles B. Parsons, however, an actor who turned clergyman (1803–1871), had acted *Rip*, at least six months before that date, in Cincinnati. This is mentioned by Ludlow, who says that he himself bought a MS. copy of the play, in New York, in the summer of 1828, and produced it, in Cincinnati, the next season;\* and the same writer notices that Charles Burke, who

\* "Rip Van Winkle" was presented at the Walnut Street Theatre, Philadelphia, as early as October 30th, 1829, with William Chapman as Rip. Mrs. Samuel Chapman (Elizabeth Jefferson), Miss Anderson (now either Mrs. Saunders or Mrs. Germon), and "J. Jefferson" (probably John), were in the cast. The piece is thought to have been of English origin, and written by a Mr. Kerr. This may have been another draft of the same play that Ludlow produced in Cincinnati, - at about the same time, or a little earlier. Hackett supplemented his first Park Theatre essay in the part of Rip by producing the old piece at the Bowery, New York, August 10th, 1830; and on April 15th, 1831, he again brought out "Rip Van Winkle" at the Park, - "altered," by himself, "from a piece written and produced in London." The same actor presented Bernard's version, for the first time in America, at the New York Park, September 4th, 1833. The eccentric and generous Tom Flynn (1804-1849) acted Rip, July 29th, 1833, at the Richmond Hill Theatre, New York. A version by Mr. John H. Hewitt, of Baltimore, was performed at the Front Street Theatre, in that city, in the season of 1833-34, with William Isherwood as Rip. Charles Burke acted the part at the New National, January 7th, 1850, having made for himself an amendment of the old piece, which Hackett subsequently preferred to the Bernard version. The subject seems to have been viewed as common property. It will be observed that Parsons, Chapman, Hackett, Yates, Flynn, Isherwood, and Burke, were all predecessors of Jefferson in Rip Van Winkle, and probably there were others; but also it will be observed that Jefferson has treated the part in an entirely original manner, lifting it into the realm of poetry, and making it a new character. - W. W.

long, afterwards followed Hackett in the part, made use of a stage version similar to this one. The Burke copy, though, was largely his own work. Hackett visited England in 1832 (it was his second expedition thither), and at that time Bayle Bernard made for him a new draft of the piece, in which he appeared in London. Bernard had already made one for Yates, which was produced, in that same year, at the London Adelphi, with Yates, John Reeve, J. B. Buckstone, O. Smith, W. Bennett, and Miss Novello in the cast. It is, perhaps, impossible to ascertain who made the first play that was ever acted on the subject of "Rip Van Winkle." The Hackett copy may have been bought by the comedian from some obscure literary hack, and the Ludlow copy may have come from the same source. The evidence, though, seems to prove that, whoever may have been the first dramatist of the subject, Parsons was the first representative of the part. The Burke version was not produced till 1849, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, — Burke acting Rip, and Jefferson acting the innkeeper, Seth. In after years Hackett adopted this copy, and so did Jefferson; but the latter comedian made changes in its construction and text. It was a mournful sort of illustration of the mutability of human affairs that as the fame of Hackett declined the fame of Jefferson arose, till at last there came a time when the old actor of Rip laid aside the part, and was content to sit in front, among the admiring spectators of the Rip Van Winkle of the new age. Jefferson's performance of Rip is a very different work from Hackett's, and a better and greater work; but not less sad was the moral to be drawn from that strange spectacle: —

"'Tis certain, greatness, once fallen out with fortune,
Must fall out with men too: What the déclin'd is
He shall as soon read in the eyes of others
As feel in his own fall. . . .
The present eye praises the present object."

The Burke copy answered Jefferson's purpose for a long time; but, at last, under his numerous changes, it became almost as nebulous as the unwritten constitution of England; and it was the sense of this fact, together with the wish to see his own idea of the possibilities of the work put into a practicable shape, that led him to employ the ingenious and sparkling pen of Mr. Boucicault, in its reconstruction. The piece, as it now stands, was written, and, on September 4th, 1865, Jefferson appeared in it, at the London Adelphi. His success was great, and it has ripened into unquestionable, unassailable, auspicious, and beneficent permanence.

A singular incident preceded this début. On the night before his first appearance in London, Jefferson, who was naturally nervous and apprehensive, retired to his apartment, and, in a mood of intense thought and abstraction, proceeded to make himself up for the third act of "Rip Van Winkle." This done, and quite oblivious of his surroundings, he now began to act the part. *Dominie Sampson* himself was never more absent-minded. The house, it should be said, fronted on Regent Street. The window-curtains happened to be raised, and the room was brightly lighted, so that the view from without was commodious and uninterrupted. Not many minutes passed before it began to be improved. A

London crowd is quick to assemble, and, when assembled, difficult to disperse. So it proved now. Inside, the absorbed and inadvertent comedian unconcernedly went on acting *Rip Van Winkle*; outside, the curious multitude, thinking him a sort of comic lunatic, choked up the street till it became impassable. The police were summoned, and with difficulty fought their way to the spot. The landlady was finally reached and alarmed; and the astonished actor, brought back to the world by a clamor at his door, inquiring if he was ill, at length realized the situation, and suspended his rehearsal.

The British public instantly took *Rip Van Winkle* to its heart. "Mr. Jefferson achieved a triumphant success on the night of his first appearance in London," says Mr. C. E. Pascoe ["The Dramatic List," p. 190], "and he has now the reputation of being one of the most genuine artists who have at any time appeared on the English stage." "In Mr. Jefferson's hands," wrote the broad-minded, true, and kindly John Oxenford, "the character of *Rip Van Winkle* becomes the vehicle for an extremely refined psychological exhibition."

Jefferson arrived in New York, on his return from England, August 13th, 1866, and on September 3d appeared at the Olympic Theatre, as *Rip Van Winkle*. The performance was received with delight by all classes of spectators, and the fame of its beauty ran over the land like fire along the prairies. The comedian also acted in this engagement *Asa Trenchard*, *Caleb Plummer*, *Mr. Woodcock*, and *Tobias Shortcut*, after which he departed on a tour of the West and South. The

next year, 1867, he was at the Olympic Theatre again (from September 9th to October 26th), and played nothing but Rip Van Winkle, which drew crowded houses; and, on his departure, he left "A Midsummer Night's Dream" on that stage, with a panorama by Telbin, which he had brought from England. Mr. George L. Fox impersonated Bottom. The beautiful play had a run of one hundred consecutive representations. During his tour of the country this year, Jefferson put into rehearsal, at the Varieties Theatre, New Orleans. then managed by the sparkling and popular light comedian William R. Floyd, the comedy of "Across the Atlantic," by Tom Robertson; but, feeling dissatisfied with himself in the character of Col. White, he sent back the piece to its author, with \$500, and Robertson subsequently sold it to Sothern, by whom it was improved in the text, and produced at the London Haymarket, under the title of "Home." Mr. Lester Wallack afterwards brought it out at his theatre in New York, and to this day Col. White continues to be one of the happiest impersonations of that polished, glittering, and delightful comedian. The summer of 1868 was passed by Jefferson among the mountains of Pennsylvania; but on August 31st he came out at McVicker's Theatre, Chicago, and it was then that the Rev. Robert Collycr said of him: -

<sup>&</sup>quot;I never saw such power, I never remarked such nature, in any Christian pulpit that it was ever my privilege to sit under, as in Joseph Jefferson's *Rip Van Winkle*. . . . So simple, so true, so beautiful, so moral! No sermon written in the world, except that of Christ when he stood with the adulterous

woman, ever illustrated the power of love, to conquer evil and to win the wanderer, as that little part does, so perfectly embodied by this genius which God has given us, to show in the drama the power of love over the sins of the race."

Jefferson had married in 1867. In 1869 he bought a large estate near Hohokus, New Jersey, in the lovely little valley of the Saddle River, and another, a lonely and gorgeous tropical island, ten miles west of New Iberia, in Louisiana, hard by the prairie home of the exiled Acadians of "Evangeline." On May 4th, that year, he began an engagement in Boston; and from August 2d till September 18th he was at Edwin Booth's new theatre in New York, still enacting Rip Van Winkle. Then came the most remarkable engagement he ever played in that city, beginning on August 15th, 1870, and lasting till January 7th, 1871, devoted exclusively to Rip, and attended by a constant multitude. Between Jefferson and Edwin Booth - whom no man ever knew well except to honor and love, and whose great services to the stage have equally been a blessing to his countrymen and a source of pure and permanent renown to himself — there has existed for many years an affectionate friendship; and, to theatrical readers at least, the fact will have its peculiar significance, that no scrap of writing was ever used between them in the business of these engagements. The year 1872 was signalized by the severe and dangerous illness of the comedian, who was attacked with glaucoma; but a skilful operation, on his left eye, performed by Dr. Reuling, of Baltimore, early in June, averted blindness, and soon restored his health. He reappeared

upon the stage, January 1st, 1873, at Ford's Opera House, Baltimore, and was received with an affectionate greeting, in which the whole country joined. On July 9th, in the ensuing summer, accompanied by his wife and by William Warren, the comedian, he sailed for England; but this was a pleasure trip, and he did not act while abroad. The return voyage began on August 16th, and on September 1st Rip Van Winkle was again seen at Booth's Theatre. The next year, 1874, on September 3d, he began his farewell engagement at the same house, and in June, 1875, he went again to England, — this time on a professional expedition. He remained abroad two years and a half. his first London engagement, at the Princess's, extending from November 1st, 1875, to April 29th, 1876, and his second, from Easter, 1877, to the ensuing midsummer, when he went to the Haymarket for a brief season of farces, under the management of John S. Clarke. In London, and in other cities of Great Britain, his acting continued to stimulate the public enthusiasm, and was everywhere hailed with sympathy and admiration. "Mr. Jefferson's departure," said the "London Telegraph," "means the loss of one of the most interesting and intellectual forms of amusement. . . . His picture is engraven on our memories. . . . There will be no lack of smiling faces when London is once more favored with the presence of so genial, accomplished, and sympathetic an artist."

Jefferson arrived home on October 17th, 1877, and on October 28th, at Booth's Theatre, under the management of Mr. Augustin Daly, again accosted his

countrymen as Rip Van Winkle. A warm-hearted welcome greeted him, and he again made a successful tour of the United States. In 1878, he paid a second visit to California, and on December 16th, that year he acted in New York, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, under the direction of Daniel H. Harkins and Stephen Fiske. After that he was absent from the metropolis of the East till October, 1879, when he appeared at the Grand Opera House; and in that theatre his New York engagements have since been fulfilled. In the autumn of 1880 he effected, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, a careful and brilliant revival of "The Rivals," and made an extraordinary hit as Bob Acres; and his professional exertions have since been divided between Acres and Rip Van Winkle. These two characters, together with Asa Trenchard, Caleb Plummer, Dr. Pangloss, Dr. Ollapod, Bob Brierly, Mr. Golightly, Tobias Shortcut, Hugh de Brass, and Tracy Coach are the only parts that Jefferson has acted within the last fifteen years.

Jefferson has been twice married. His first wife, to whom he was wedded on May 19th, 1850, in New York, was Margaret Clements Lockyer, a native of Burnham, Somersetshire, England, born September 6th, 1832, and brought to America, by her parents, while yet a child. She went on the stage when about sixteen years old, and early in her career was connected with the Museum at Troy, New York. Ireland mentions that she appeared at the Bowery Theatre, New York, on November 6th, 1847, on the occasion of the benefit of Thomas H. Blakeley. "Chanfrau

and Mrs. Timm, from the Olympic, enacted *Feremiah Clip* and *Fane Chatterly*, in 'The Widow's Victim,' and a pas de deux was executed by the Misses Barber and Lockyer. The latter was young and talented." She is mentioned, on another occasion, as having acted Norah, in "The Poor Soldier." \* At the time of her meeting and marriage with Jefferson she was a member of the company at the National Theatre, New York. After her marriage she did not continuously pursue the dramatic profession, nor did she at any time acquire exceptional distinction as an actress. Her death occurred on February 18th, 1861, in Twelfth Street, New York, and she was buried at Cypress Hills, Long Island.

The children of this union were the following: -

- I. CHARLES BURKE JEFFERSON. Born at Macon, Georgia, March 20th, 1851. This son adopted the stage, and made his first regular professional appearance, November 26th, 1869, at McVicker's Theatre, Chicago. The occasion was that of his father's benefit, and Charles, a handsome youth, of eighteen, acted Dickory, in "The Spectre Bridegroom." He has acted other parts since then, but has not steadily pursued the dramatic profession, and is now in retirement from the stage. He manifested unmistakable talents for acting.
- 2. MARGARET JANE JEFFERSON. Born at New York, July 4th, 1853. She was never on the stage, and is now the wife of Benjamin L. Farjeon, the distinguished English novelist, to whom she was married, in London, in June, 1877.
- 3. Frances Florence Jefferson. Born at Baltimore, Maryland, July 9th, 1855; died there, December 12th, 1855.
- \* "The Poor Soldier." Comic Opera, by John O'Keefe. 1798. Altered, and improved, by the author, from his earlier farce (1783) of "The Shamrock." Wood mentions that this piece was a favorite with George Washington. W. W.

- 4. JOSEPH JEFFERSON, JR. Born at Richmond, Virginia, in September, 1856; died there in 1857.
- 5. Thomas Jefferson. Born at New York in 1857. This is Jefferson the Fifth. In early boyhood he was sent to London, and afterwards to Paris, to be educated. Having adopted the stage, he made his first regular professional appearance, at Edinburgh, in the character of *Coccles*, in "Rip Van Winkle," in 1877, acting in his father's theatrical company. He was engaged at Wallack's Theatre, New York, in January, 1880, for the part of *Anatole*, in "A Scrap of Paper," and he again played the same part there, in March, 1881. When his father revived "The Rivals," September 13th, 1880, at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, he was cast for *Fag*, and in that mercurial type of bland mendacity and good-natured assurance he has made a pleasing impression. The earnest good wishes of many friends already anticipate for him a bright career.

6. JOSEPHINE DUFF JEFFERSON. — Born at New York, November 10th, 1859. She never was on the stage.

The second marriage of Mr. Jefferson occurred on December 20th, 1867, at Chicago. His bride was Miss Sarah Warren, a daughter of his father's second cousin, Mr. Henry Warren, brother of the Boston comedian. The children of this marriage are:—

- 1. Joseph Warren Jefferson. Born at New York, July 6th, 1869.
- 2. HENRY JEFFERSON. Born at Chicago, Illinois. Died, at London, England, November 5th, 1875. Buried at Cypress Hills, L. I.
- 3. WILLIAM WINTER JEFFERSON. Born in Bedford House, Tavistock Square, London, April 25th, 1876, and christened, on June 27th, the same year, in the Church of the Holy Trinity the Shakespeare church at Stratford on Avon.

Jefferson the Fourth, resembling his grandfather in this as in some other particulars, has shown remarkable versatility in the dramatic art, not only by the wealth of contrasted attributes lavished by him upon *Rip Van Winkle*, which he has made almost a complete epitome of human nature and representative experience, but by the number and variety of the parts that he has acted. A list of some of these characters is given here:—

## PARTS ACTED BY JEFFERSON THE FOURTH.

Rip Van Winkle, in the drama of that name. Old version by Charles Burke. 1849. New one by Dion Boucicault. Adelphi, London. 1865.

Bob Acres, in "The Rivals."

Dogberry and also Verges, in Shakespeare's comedy of "Much Ado About Nothing."

Touchstone, in Shakespeare's comedy of "As You Like It." Roderigo, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Othello."

Dr. Ollapod, and also Stephen Harrowby, in "The Poor Gentleman."

Slender, in Shakespeare's comedy of "The Merry Wives of Windsor."

Peter, in "The Stranger."

Dickory, in "The Spectre Bridegroom."

Tobias Shortcut, in "The Spitfire." Farce. By J. M. Morton. Covent Garden, 1838.

Osric, and also the First and the Second Gravedigger, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Hamlet."

Donaldbain, Malcolm, and the Three Witches, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Macbeth."

The Lord Mayor, Catesby, Oxford, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of York, in Cibber's version of Shakespeare's tragedy of "Richard the Third."

Peter, and also Paris, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "Romeo and Juliet."

Oswald, in Shakespeare's tragedy of "King Lear."

Dr. Pangloss, in "The Heir at Law."

Dan, in "John Bull." Comedy. By George Colman, Jr. Covent Garden, 1805.

Goldfinch, in "The Road to Ruin." Comedy. By Thomas Holcroft. Covent Garden, 1792.

Sampson Rawbold, in "The Iron Chest." Tragedy. By George Colman, Jr. Drury Lane, 1796. Music by Storace. Kemble was the original Sir Edward Mortimer. This piece was based on William Godwin's novel of "Caleb Williams," and should be contrasted with that tale, for an apt illustration of the difference between narrative and dramatic writing.

Caleb Quotem, and also John Lump, in "The Review, or The Wags of Windsor." Farce. By George Colman, Jr. Haymarket. Authorized edition, 1808. Fawcett was the original Caleb Quotem. Junius Brutus Booth was fond of acting John Lump, and Jefferson the Fourth has acted Caleb Quotem to the John Lump of that tragedian.

Tony Lumpkin, in "She Stoops To Conquer." Comedy. By Oliver Goldsmith. Covent Garden, 1773.

Francis, in Shakespeare's historical play of "Henry the Fourth."

Whiskerandos, in "The Critic."

Bob, in "Old Heads and Young Hearts." Comedy. By Dion Boucicault. Haymarket.

Granby Gag, in "Jenny Lind."

Sir Brian, in "Ivanhoe." Burlesque. By the Brough Brothers.

Joe Meggs, in "The Parish Clerk." Drama. By Dion Boucicault. Contains one beautiful situation. Has never been acted in America.

Bob Brierly, in "The Ticket-of-Leave Man." Drama. By Tom Taylor. 1863.

Mr. Lullaby, in "A Conjugal Lesson."

Mr. Golightly, in "Lend Me Five Shillings."

Jacques Strop, in "Robert Macaire."

Bob Trickett, in "An Alarming Sacrifice." The first Mrs. Jefferson played Susan Sweetapple.

Fainwould, in "Raising the Wind." Farce. By James Kenney. Covent Garden, 1803.

Dr. Smugface, in "A Budget of Blunders." Farce. By Prince Hoare. Covent Garden, 1810.

Simon, in "The Rendezvous."

Kaserac, in "Aladdin."

Sheepface, in "The Village Lawyer." Farce. 1795.

Fixture, in "A Roland For an Oliver."

Pillicoddy, in "Poor Pillicoddy." Farce. By J. M. Morton.

Slasher, in "Slasher and Crasher." Farce. By J. M. Morton.

Box, and also Cox, in "Box and Cox." Farce. By J. M. Morton. Haymarket, 1847. Jefferson was the original Cox, in America, and Burton the original Box—at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, in 1848.

Mr. Fluffy, in "Mother and Child."

Mr. Brown, in the farce of "My Neighbor's Wife."

Oliver Dobbs, in "Agnes de Vere."

Andrew, the Savoyard, in "Isabel."

Mr. Gilman, in "The Happiest Day of My Life."

Mr. Timid, in "The Dead Shot."

La Fleur, in "Animal Magnetism." Farce. By Elizabeth Inchbald. Covent Garden, 1788.

Isaac, in "Lucille."

Niken, in "The Carpenter of Rouen."

Figaro, in "The Barber of Seville."

Robin, in "The Waterman, or the First of August." Ballad opera. By Charles Dibdin. Haymarket, 1774.

Pan, in "Midas." Burlesque. By Kane O'Hara. Covent Garden, 1764-1771.

Prop, in "No Song no Supper."

Salem Scudder, in "The Octoroon." Drama. By Dion Boucicault. Winter Garden, New York, 1859.

Joshua Butterby, in "Victims." Comedy. By Tom Taylor. Mazeppa, in the burlesque of that name, by H. J. Byron.

John Quill, in "Beauty and the Beast."

The Sentinel, in "Pizarro."

Crabtree, Moses, and Trip, in "The School for Scandal."

The Infant Furibond, in "The Invisible Prince."

Hugh Chalcote, in "Ours." Comedy. By Tom Robertson.

Mr. Woodcock, in "Woodcock's Little Game."

Hans Morritz, in "Somebody Else."

James, in "Blue Devils."

Toby Twinkle, in "All that Glitters is Not Gold."

Caleb Plummer, in "Dot, or The Cricket on the Hearth." Drama. By Dion Boucicault. Based on the beautiful Christmas story by Charles Dickens.

Newman Noggs, in "Nicholas Nickleby." Drama. By Dion Boucicault. Based on the novel by Dickens.

Asa Trenchard, in "Our American Cousin." Drama. By Tom Taylor. Laura Keene's Theatre, New York, 1858.

Tracy Coach, in "Baby."

Pierrot, in "Linda, The Pearl of Chamouni."

Wyndham, in "The Handsome Husband."

Dick, in "Paddy the Piper." Drama. By James Pilgrim. New National Theatre, New York, October 6th, 1850.

The Steward, in "The Child of the Regiment."

Pierre Rouge, in "The Husband of an Hour." Drama. By Edmund Falconer.

Septimus, in "My Son Diana."

Dr. Botherby, in "An Unequal Match." Comedy. By Tom Taylor.

Dard, in "White Lies." Drama. By Cyril Turner. Based on the novel, so named, by Charles Reade, and of French origin.

Gloss, in "Doublefaced People." Comedy. By H. Courtney. Beppo, in "Fra Diavolo." Burlesque. By H. J. Byron.

Yonkers, in "Chamooni the Third." Burlesque. By Dion Boucicault. Winter Garden, New York, 1859.

C. T. Item, and also The Tycoon, in "The Tycoon, or Young America in Japan." Burlesque. By William Brough. Adapted by Fitz-James O'Brien and Joseph Jefferson. Olympic, New York, 1860.

Old Phil Stapleton, in "Old Phil's Birthday." Foe Wadd, in "The Hope of the Family."

## JEFFERSON AS RIP VAN WINKLE.

Every reader of Washington Irving knows the story of Rip Van Winkle's adventure on the Kaatskill Mountains, - that delightful, romantic idyl, in which character, humor, and fancy are so delicately blended. Under the spell of Jefferson's acting we are transported into the past, and made to see, as with bodily eyes, the oldfashioned Dutch civilization as it crept up the borders of the Hudson: the quaint and quiet villages: the stout Hollanders, with their pipes and schnapps; the loves and troubles of an elder generation. calmer life than ours; yet the same elements compose it. Here is a mean and cruel schemer making a goodhearted man his victim, and thriving on the weakness that he so well knows how to betray. Here is parental love, tried, as it often is, by sad cares; and here the love of young and hopeful hearts, blooming amid flowers, sunshine, music, and happiness. Riv Van Winkle never seemed so lovable as he does in the form of this great actor, standing thus in poetic relief against the background of real life. Jefferson makes him our familiar friend. We see that Rip is a weak, vacillating fellow, fond of his bottle and his ease, but - beneath all his rags and tatters, of character as well as raiment — good to the core. We understand why the village children love him, why the dogs run after him with joy, and why the jolly boys at the tavern welcome his song and story and genial companionship. He has wasted his fortune and impoverished his wife and child, and 'we know that he is much to blame.

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He knows it too; and his talk with the children shows how keenly he feels the consequence of a weakness which yet he is unable to atone for or subdue. It is in these minute touches that Jefferson shows his sympathetic study of human nature; his intuitive perception, looking quite through the hearts and thoughts of men. The observer sees this in the struggle of Rip's long-submerged but only dormant spirit of manliness, when his wife turns him from their home, in night and storm and abandoned degradation. Still more vividly is it shown in his pathetic bewilderment, — his touching embodiment of the anguish of lonely age bowed down by sorrow and doubt, - when he comes back from his sleep of twenty years. His disclosure of himself to his daughter marks the climax of pathos, and every heart is melted by those imploring looks of mute suspense, those broken accents of love that almost fears an utterance. It would be hard to say which portion of Jefferson's performance is the more admirable. Perhaps the perfection of his acting is seen in the weird and beautiful interview with the ghosts. This situation, surely, is one of the greatest ever devised for the stage; and the actor himself created it. Midnight, on the highest peak of the Kaatskills, dimly lighted by the moon. No one speaks but Rip. The ghosts cluster around him. The grim but stately shade of Henry Hudson proffers a cup of drink to the mortal intruder, already dazed by his supernatural surroundings. Poor Rip, almost shuddering in the awful silence, yet bold, and full of his quaint nature, pledges the ghosts, in their own liquor. Then, suddenly the

spell is broken; shouts of goblin laughter resound over the echoing mountain; the moon is lost in struggling clouds; the spectres glide away and slowly vanish; and *Rip Van Winkle*, with the drowsy, piteous murmur, "Don't leave me, boys," falls into his mystic sleep.

This idle, good-natured, dram-drinking Dutch spendthrift - so perfectly reproduced, yet so exalted and purified by ideal treatment - is not certainly an heroic figure, and cannot be said to possess an exemplary significance, either in himself or his experience. temperament has that fine fibre which everybody loves, and everybody, accordingly, has a good feeling for him, although nobody may have a good word for his way of life. All observers know this order of man. He is generally as poor as a church mouse. He never did a bad action in all his life. He is continually cheering the weak and lowly. He always wears a smile upon his face, - the reflex of his gentle heart. Ambition does not trouble him. His wants are few. He has no care, except when, now and then, he feels that he may have wasted time and talents, or when the sorrow of others falls darkly on his heart. This, however, is rare; for at most times he is "bright as light and clear as wind." Nature has established with him a kind of kindred that she allows with only a chosen few. In him Shakespeare's rosy ideal is suggested: "The singing birds are his musicians, the flowers fair ladies, and his steps no more than a delightful measure or a dance." This manner of man Jefferson's Rip Van Winkle embodies, and that is the secret of its charm. Nobody would dream of setting him up as a model; but everybody is glad

that he exists. Most persons work so hard, are so full of care and trouble, so weighed down with the sense of duty, so anxious to regulate the world and put everything to rights, that contact with a nature which does not care for the stress and din of toil, but dwells in an atmosphere of sunshiny idleness, and is the embodiment of goodness, innocence, and careless mirth, brings a positive relief. This is the feeling that Jefferson's acting inspires. The halo of genius is all around it. Sincerity, humor, pathos, vivid imagination, and a gentleness that is akin with wild flowers and woodland brooks, slumberous, slow-drifting summer-clouds, and soft music heard upon the waters, in star-lit nights of June — these are the springs of the actor's art. There are a hundred beauties of method in it which satisfy the judgment and fascinate the sense of symmetry; but underlying these beauties there is a magical sweetness of temperament — a delicate blending of humor, pathos, gentleness, quaintness, and dream-like repose which awakens the most affectionate sympathy. subtile spirit is the potent charm of the impersonation. All possible labor (and Jefferson sums up in this performance the culture acquired in many years of professional toil) could not supply that charm. It is a celestial gift. It is the divine fire. It is what the philosophic poet Emerson, with fine and far-reaching significance, calls

"The untaught strain
That sheds beauty on the rose."

In depicting Rip Van Winkle Jefferson reaches the perfection of the actor's art; which is to delineate a

distinctly individual character, through successive stages of growth, till the story of a life is completely told. If the student of acting would feelingly appreciate the fineness and force of the dramatic art that is displayed in this work, let him, in either of the pivotal passages, consider the complexity and depth of the effect, as contrasted with the simplicity of the means that are used to produce it. There is no trickery in the charm. The sense of beauty is satisfied, because the object that it apprehends is beautiful. The heart is deeply and surely touched, for the simple and sufficient reason that the character and experience revealed to it are lovely and pathetic. For Rip Van Winkle's goodness exists as an oak exists, and is not dependent on principle, precept, or resolution. Howsoever he may drift he cannot drift away from human affection. Weakness was never punished with more sorrowful misfortune than his. Dear to us for what he is, he becomes dearer still for what he suffers, and (in the acting of Jefferson) for the manner in which he suffers it. That manner, arising out of complete identification with the part, informed by intuitive and liberal knowledge of human nature, and guided by an unerring instinct of taste, is the crown of Jefferson's art. It is unrestrained; it is graceful; it is free from effort; it is equal to every situation; and it shows, with the precision and delicacy of the finest miniature-painting, the gradual, natural changes of the character, as wrought by the pressure of experience. Its result is the perfect embodiment of a rare type of human nature and mystical experience, embellished by the appliances of romance and exalted by the atmosphere of poetry; and no person of imagination and sensibility can see it without being charmed by its humor, thrilled by its manifold suggestions of beauty, and made more and more sensible that life is utterly worthless, howsoever brilliantly its ambitions may happen to be rewarded, unless it is hallowed by love and soothed by kindness.

There will be, as there have been, many Rip Van Winkles: there is but one Jefferson. For him it was reserved to idealize the entire subject; to elevate a prosaic type of good-natured indolence into an ideal emblem of poetical freedom; to construct and translate, in the world of fact, the Arcadian vagabond of the world of dreams. In the presence of his wonderful embodiment of this droll, gentle, drifting human creature - to whom trees and brooks and flowers are familiar companions, to whom spirits appear, and for whom the mysterious voices of the lonely midnight forest have a meaning and a charm — the observer feels that poetry is no longer restricted to canvas, and marble, and rapt reverie over the printed page, but walks forth crystallized in a human form, spangled with the freshness of the diamond dews of morning, mysterious with hints of woodland secrets, lovely with the simplicity and joy of rustic freedom, and fragrant with the incense of the pines.

The world does not love *Rip Van Winkle* because he drinks schnapps, nor because he is unthrifty, nor because he banters his wife, nor because he neglects his duties as a parent. All these are faults, and he is loved in spite of them. Underneath all his defects the

human nature of the man is as sound and bright as the finest gold; and it is out of this interior beauty that the charm of Jefferson's personation arises. The conduct of Rip Van Winkle is the result of his character, and not of his drams. At the sacrifice of some slight comicality, here and there, the element of intoxication might be left out of his experience altogether, and he would still act in the same way, and possess the same fascination. Jefferson's Rip, of course, is meant, and not Irving's. The latter was "a thirsty soul," accustomed to frequent the tavern; and thirsty souls who often seek taverns neither go there to practise total abstinence, nor come thence with poetical attributes of nature. No such idea of Rip Van Winkle can be derived from Irving's sketch as is given in Jefferson's acting. Irving seems to have written the sketch for the sake of the ghostly legend it embodies; but he made no attempt to elaborate the character of its hero, or to present it as a poetic one. Jefferson has exalted the conception. In his embodiment the drink is merely an expedient, to plunge the hero into domestic strife and open the way for his ghostly adventure and his pathetic resuscitation. The machinery may be clumsy; but that does not invalidate either the beauty of the character or the supernatural thrill and mortal anguish of the experience. In these abides the soul of this great work, which, while it captivates the heart, also enthralls the imagination, - taking us away from the region of the commonplace, away also from the region of the passions, lifting us above the storms of life, its sorrows, its losses, and its fret, till we rest at last on Nature's

bosom, children once more, and once more happy. No words can more than hint at this inherent and indefinable magic. Its results disclose its presence; for, as long ago was beautifully said by the poet Alexander Smith:—

"Love gives itself; and, if not given, No genius, beauty, state, or wit, No gold of earth, no gem of heaven, Is rich enough to purchase it."

Washington Irving (1783–1859) did not live to be a witness of the great success of Jefferson, in the character—suggested and made possible by himself—of *Rip Van Winkle*. But Irving saw Jefferson upon the stage, and remembered his grandfather, and appreciated and admired the acting of both. The following mention of the Jeffersons occurs in the Journal of the last days of Washington Irving, kept by his nephew, Pierre M. Irving, and published in 1862:—

"September 30th, 1858.— Mr. Irving came in town, to remain a few days. In the evening went to Laura Keene's Theatre, to see young Jefferson as Goldfinch, in Holcroft's comedy of 'The Road to Ruin.' Thought Jefferson, the father, one of the best actors he had ever seen; and the son reminded him, in look, gesture, size, and make, of the father. Had never seen the father in Goldfinch, but was delighted with the son."—Life and Letters of Washington Irving. Vol. IV., p. 253.

The grandfather, and not the father, evidently, was meant, in this reference. Irving had seen Jefferson the Second, in the old days of "Salmagundi." It is doubtful whether he ever saw Jefferson the Third, the father of our comedian.

Jefferson's persistent adherence to the character of *Rip Van Winkle* has often, and naturally, been made the subject of inquiry and remark. The late Charles Mathews once said to him: "Jefferson, I'm glad to see you making your fortune, but I hate to see you doing it with one part and a carpet-bag." "It is certainly better," answered the comedian, "to play one part and make it various, than to play a hundred parts and make them all alike."

A singular and comic incident attended one of Jefferson's performances of *Rip Van Winkle*, at Charleston, South Carolina. He had reached the first scene of the third act, and the venerable *Rip*, just awakened from his long sleep, was slowly and painfully raising himself from the earth. The whole house was hushed, in anxious and pitying suspense. At this moment the heavy, floundering tread of a drunken man was heard in the gallery. He descended in the centre aisle, reached the front row, and gazed upon the stage. Then, suddenly, was heard his voice, — distinctly audible throughout the theatre, — the voice of interested curiosity, tipsy gravity, and a good-natured thirst for knowledge: "What the h—'s that old idiot tryin' to do?"

## JEFFERSON AS BOB ACRES.

Philadelphia, September 15th, 1880.\*

Jefferson has at last complied with the desire, generally felt and frequently expressed within the last two or three years,

<sup>\*</sup> This letter was written in the "New York Tribune," by the author of this biography, and it is now reprinted, in a condensed form, from that journal. — W. W.

that he should appear in some other part than Rip Van Winkle. He has not tired of his old character, any more than the public has tired of it; but he has felt the mental need of a change, and he has recognized the claims of the new generation of play-goers upon that versatility of art and those resources of faculty and humor which gave enjoyment to theatrical audiences of an earlier time, and which laid the basis of his professional renown. He has not been unwilling, neither, - it is probable, - to correct a mistaken contemporary impression, current to some extent, that he is only a one-part actor. In former days, and long before he took up Rip Van Winkle, Jefferson acted many parts; and very early in his career he was recognized, by the dramatic profession and by the more discerning part of the public, as an actor of great versatility. His personations of Asa Trenchard, Caleb Plummer, Dr. Pangloss, Dr. Ollapod, Diggory, Salem Scudder, Mr. Golightly, Mr. Lullaby, Newman Noggs, Goldfinch, Bob Brierly, the burlesque Mazeppa, and Tobias Shortcut (and these are but a few of the many in which he was excellent and distinguished, long ago) still linger in the memory of old playgoers, and are remembered only to be admired and extolled. But since, for the last fourteen years - the period succeeding his return from England, in 1866 - he has seldom acted any thing but Rip Van Winkle, the public conception of him as a general actor has grown dim, or has altogether faded away. In taking the step which he has now taken, by reviving, as a specialty, the comedy of "The Rivals," and appearing as Bob Acres (in which part, many years ago, he made one of his earliest and best successes), he affords refreshment to his own mind; he decreases the possibility of his making Rip Van Winkle hackneved and tedious; he satisfies a natural craving for novelty on the part of his admirers; he revives, or awakens, a just sense of the breadth of his scope as a comedian; and, keeping abreast of the progress of modern taste, he gives his public a new pleasure, a new lesson in dramatic art, and a new subject for study and thought. It was a wise deed to do; and it will be productive of wholesome results, in its influence upon theatrical interests throughout the country.

Those persons who are acquainted with the professional career of Jefferson are aware that it has been marked, all along its course, by extraordinary wisdom. He has made few mistakes, - never one in an important juncture of affairs. He came to the capital at the right time, and in the right way. He very early applied to the old comedies the right, because the pure and poetic, method of treatment. He could look far ahead for the results of his labor and devotion, and he made fidelity to the highest ideal of art the first object of his life. He understood perfectly well the nature of the structure that he was rearing, and he never trusted anything to chance. was he who caused the production of "Our American Cousin," at Laura Keene's Theatre (in New York, October 18th, 1858), and so made one of the greatest dramatic successes of which there is any record. He had the foresight to select, while yet a young man, the character through which his powers were destined to find their amplest expression, - the character of Rip Van Winkle; and for that he shaped out an ideal and a treatment so original, high, poetic, fresh, and lovely, so utterly unlike and so far above the conception of Washington Irving's sketch and the embodiment of previous actors - whether Hackett or Yates or Burke or anybody else - that he may be said to have created the part. He left America, and visited Australia, at a favorable period for such an expedition, and with a practical view to subsequent success upon the London stage. He sagaciously resorted to Mr. Dion Boucicault, in London, when he deemed it essential that a new play should be built upon the basis of the old one, and he furnished to that practical dramatist a general outline of the piece, the drift of the central character, and the great situation in the second act of "Rip Van Winkle" as it now stands, - a dramatic idea which of itself would suffice to prove him a man of genius. He returned home opportunely, after his extraordinary triumphs in Great Britain; and the fame and fortune he has since acquired, the affection with which his memory is cherished, and the joyous admiration with which his name is spoken throughout this country are abundant and sufficient evidence that his conduct

of the artist-life, since then, has been no less prudent and right than kindly, modest, gentle, and sincere. It is not caprice which shapes such a career as that of Jefferson, nor is it accident that has crowned it with the laurels of honor.

The same sagacity that has guided the comedian hitherto is shown in the choice he has now made of a piece and a character to contrast with Rip Van Winkle. Of all the old comedies, "The Rivals" is obviously the best that this actor could have selected, with a view - most essential to be taken! - of making his particular part in the performance the apex of the entertainment. The piece is one that has not become antiquated in time. Its picture of life and manners is as modern and as vital as it is clear, richly-colored, humorous, and brilliant. The spirit of it, moreover, is human, kindly, and pure. There is no taint of indelicacy in the plot, - no streak of serious and painful licentiousness, such as smirches the mirror of its great companion piece, "The School for Scandal," - and in the style there is nothing of the superabundance of brittle wit which imparts to the most of Sheridan's writings such a tiresome glitter of artifice. The play is fresh, genial, human, simple and droll; it has interest of story, a breezy movement, and substantial, well-contrasted characters; and its theme, incidents, and atmosphere are precisely suited to Jefferson's quality of humor and to his nimble and subtile artistic method. He thus obtains a means of expression by which he can seize and hold the kindly sympathy of the spectator - unconsciously, and therefore the more sweetly given — all the while that he is scattering over him the flowers of mirth, and waking in his heart the echoes of happy laughter. It would be hard to find in English literature another comedy, equally sparkling with life, wholesome in spirit, delightful in color, and merry and gentle in influence, in which a single, and that a comic, character - one of a group, yet drawn and kept in harmony with its surroundings - could thus be made tributary to the idiosyncrasies of an actor, and thus elevated into shining prominence, without injury to its own integrity, and without violence to the symmetry of the play. After seeing "The





Rivals," as Jefferson and his company present it, the spectator retires with a great kindness for the old piece, and with the conviction that, in Jefferson's performance of *Bob Acres*, he has seen a slight character made fascinating by drollery of spirit, sincerity of feeling, amplitude of treatment, and grace of expression.

When "The Rivals" was first produced [1775], it had to be cut, in a ruthless manner, before it could be made to succeed. The author, then but twenty-three years old, had written it with exuberant spirits, and it contained substance enough for two plays rather than one. Jefferson has not hesitated to cut it still further, and slightly to change its sequence of action, and here and there, in the character of Bob Acres, to fill in traits that the author has only outlined, to add new business, - always, however, in harmony with the original conception, - and to give, by occasional new lines, an added emphasis and prolongation to the humorous strokes of Sheridan. The brightness of the effect denotes a decided improvement. The comedy is given in three acts. The first curtain falls upon the exit of Sir Anthony Absolute, after his choleric scene with his son. The second falls upon the exit of Acres, at the words, "Tell him I kill a man a week." And the third falls upon the close of the piece, with a tag that Jefferson has added. The character of Julia is cut out, and that of Falkland is considerably reduced. This is a relief, since these parts are only pleasant when acted by players of the first class, such as can no longer now be got to undertake them. The loose lines, as well as what Moore called the "false finery and second-rate ornament," have been scored away. Two of the scenes of Acres have been blended into one, so that the vain and timorous squire's truculence, when writing the challenge, may be made the more comical by immediate contrast with his dismay and gradually growing cowardice, as he begins to realize its possible consequences. In other respects there is no change. actors carry the piece, and it moves with smooth celerity. The cast comprises Jefferson as Bob Acres, Frederick Robinson as Sir Anthony Absolute, Mrs. John Drew as Mrs. Malaprop, Mr.

Maurice Barrymore as Captain Absolute, Mr. Charles Waverley as Sir Lucius O'Trigger, Miss Rosa Rand as Lydia Languish, Miss Adine Stephens as Lucy, Mr. H. F. Taylor as Falkland, Mr. Thomas Jefferson (second son of the comedian) as Fag, and Mr. J. Galloway as David. The parts are beautifully dressed, although with some intentional inaccuracy as to powdered hair; and, as the rehearsals have been thorough, the representation is marked by clearness of outline, boldness of color, and harmony of effect.

To the present public Jefferson as Bob Acres is an absolute novelty. He was, however, as has been said, long ago distinguished in it; and he has played this part, and also Pangloss, and Ollapod, season after season — a few times each at Ford's Theatre, in Baltimore. In 1871, on the occasion of the Holland Benefit, in New York, he charmed an immense audience with his representation of Mr. Golightly; and this exquisite work he gave, a few years later (1877), in London, on the occasion of a benefit to the impoverished and dying veteran, Henry Compton, when his success was so great that John S. Clarke immediately proposed to him a season of farce at the Haymarket, - a season devoted to Mr. Golightly and Hugh De Brass, - in which, while the treasury neither largely gained nor lost at all, the connoisseurs of the British capital enjoyed a kind of acting which they conceded to be equal with the best upon the Parisian comedy stage. To those, accordingly, who keep the track of such affairs it is not unknown that Jefferson's extraordinary felicity in light parts, whether of comedy, burlesque, or farce, resides in his application to them of an intense earnestness of spirit and a poetic treatment, - by which is meant a treatment that interprets, illustrates, and elevates the character. In this way he has now embodied Bob Acres: and as the most scrupulous attention has been given to every detail - even the slightest - in the revival of the comedy, his impersonation of that amusing character can now be seen in greater fulness and freedom, and with the advantage of better surroundings, than ever before.

Jefferson appears in three scenes: the first, that of the

call which is made by Acres at the lodging of Captain Absolute, where he meets Falkland; the second, that of his reception of Sir Lucius O' Trigger, at his own chambers, when he writes the challenge to the mythical Beverley, is frightened by the terrors of his bumpkin servant, David, and, at last, with rueful reluctance, entrusts the warlike missive to Captain Absolute; and the third, that of the frustrated meeting in King's Mead Meadows, when, in the extremity of fear, his "valor oozes out at the tips of his fingers," and the snarl that young Absolute has woven is finally and happily disentangled. The variety that he evokes from these scenes is little less than wonderful. At first it seems as if he had overladen the character with meaning, and lifted it too far. But, when this creation is studied, it is immediately seen that the actor has only taken the justifiable and admirable license of deepening the lines and tints of the author, and of endearing the character by infusing into it an amiable and lovable personality. That this was not clearly intended by Sheridan would not invalidate its propriety. The part admits of it, and is better for it; and this certainly would have been intended had it been thought of, - for it makes the play doubly interesting and potential. That Acres becomes a striking figure in the group, and a vigorous motive in the action, is only because he is thus splendidly vitalized. Were the other parts electrified by an equal genius in the performance of them it would instantly be seen that he has no undue prominence.

Jefferson has considered that a country squire need not necessarily reek of the ale-house and the stables; that Acres is neither the noisy and vulgar Tony Lumpkin, nor the "horsey" Goldfinch; that there is, in a certain way, a little touch of the Wildrake in his composition; that he is not less kindly because vain and empty-headed; that he has tender ties of home, and a background of innocent, domestic life; that his head is completely turned by contact with town fashions; that there may be a kind of artlessness in his ridiculous assumption of rakish airs; that there is something a little pitiable in his braggadocio; that he is a good fellow, at heart; and that his sufferings

in the predicament of the duel are genuine, intense, and quite as doleful as they are comic. All this appears in the personation. You are struck at once by the elegance of the figure, the grace of movement, the winning appearance and temperament; and Bob Acres gets your friendship, and is a welcome presence, laugh at him as you may. Jefferson has introduced a comic blunder with which to take him out of the first scene with Absolute, and also some characteristic comic business for him, before a mirror, when Sir Lucius, coming upon him unawares, finds him practising bows and studying deportment. He does not seem contemptible in these situations; he only seems, as he ought to seem, absurdly comical. He communicates to every spectator his joy in the success of his curl-papers; and no one, even amidst uncontrollable laughter, thinks of his penning of his challenge as otherwise than a proceeding of the most serious importance. He is made a lovable human being, with an experience of action and suffering, and our sympathies with him, on his battle-field, would be really painful but that we are in the secret, and know it will turn out well. The interior spirit of Jefferson's impersonation, then, is soft humanity and sweet good nature; and the traits that he has especially emphasized are ludicrous vanity and comic trepidation. He never leaves a moment unfilled with action, when he is on the scene, and all his by-play is made tributary to the expression of these traits. One of his fresh and deft touches is the trifling with Captain Absolute's gold-laced hat, and - obviously to the eye - considering whether it would be becoming to himself. The acting is full of these bits of felicitous embroidery. Nothing could possibly be more humorous or more full of nature than the mixture of assurance, uneasy levity, and dubious apprehension, at the moment when the challenge has at last and irrevocably found its way into Captain Absolute's pocket. The rueful face, then, is a study for a painter, and only a portrait could do it justice. The mirth of the duel scene it is impossible to convey. It must be supreme art indeed which can arouse, at the same instant, as this does, an almost tender solicitude and an inextinguishable laughter. The little

introductions of a word or two here and there in the text, made at this point by the comedian, are delightfully happy. To make *Acres* say that he doesn't care "how little the risk is" was an inspiration; and his sudden and joyous greeting, "How are you, Falkland?" — with the relief that it implies, and the momentary return of the airy swagger, — is a stroke of genius. The performance, altogether, is as exquisite a piece of comedy as ever has been seen, in our time. You do not think, till you look back upon it, how fine it is, — so easy is its manner, and so perfectly does it sustain the illusion of real life.

Mrs. Drew has treated in the same earnest spirit the character of Mrs. Malaprop, and it would be difficult to overstate the merit of her performance. It is as fine as anything of the kind can possibly be. The dressing is appropriately rich, and in suitable tastė. The manner is decorous and stately. The personality is decidedly formidable. The deportment is elaborate and overwhelming, as it should be. The delivery of the text is heautiful in its accuracy and finish, and in its unconscious grace. The word is always matched by the right mood, and not a single blunder, in what this eccentric character calls her "orthodoxy," is made in any spirit but that of fervent conviction. It is worth the journey to this place merely to hear her say "He has enveloped the plot to me, and he will give you the perpendiculars." The bit of illustrative stage business with the letter - giving to Absolute, by mistake, one of the loveletters of O'Trigger, instead of the intercepted epistle of Beverley - was done with a bridling simper and an antique blush that were irresistible. The pervasive excellence of the work is its intense reality, and this redeems the extravagance of the character and the farcical quality of its text. For the first time it seemed as if Mrs. Malaprop might truly exist. The part has before now been greatly acted; but never till now, in our time, has it seemed to be actually lived.

The other impersonations are not level with those of Mr. Jefferson and Mrs. Drew; but Mr. Frederick Robinson will be remarkably fine in *Sir Anthony Absolute*, when he has gained in it somewhat more of the mellowness of age. His choler and

his humor are capital, and his charming management of the dubious, pausing moments of suspicion, in Captain Absolute's hoodwinking scene with Sir Anthony, gave it glowing color and captivating warmth of humor. Mr. Tom Jefferson was a gay and effective figure, as Fag, and he made his satirical exit with such skill and effect as promise a good comedian. The actors work together with fine zeal and in harmony with a clear, dominant purpose; and this presentment of "The Rivals" cannot fail, while imparting pleasure as it passes, to teach the salutary lesson of what thoroughness and sincerity can accomplish in the ministry of art. Never to slight anything we do, but to go to the depth and height of the subject, and bring out all its meaning and all its beauty, - that is the lesson of this splendid success with one of the everyday plays of our theatre. The wild flower that grows by the wayside, if you but nurture it aright, will reward your care, a hundred fold, in loveliness and bloom.

NOTE. — Jefferson produced "The Rivals" and personated Acres, at the Union Square Theatre, New York, on September 12th, 1881. This was his first presentation of the subject, in that capital, since the Philadelphia revival. The cast of characters was the following:—

Acres					Mr. Jefferson.
Sir Anthony Absol	ute				Frederick Robinson.
Captain Absolute					Mark Pendleton.
Sir Lucius O'Trigg	er				Charles Waverley.
Falkland					Henry F. Taylor.
Fag					Thomas Jefferson.
David					James Galloway.
Mrs. Malaprop .					Mrs. John Drew.
Lydia Languish .					Miss Rose Wood.
Lucy					Miss Eugenia Paul.

## CONCLUSION.

The development of the character of Jefferson the FIRST seems to have proceeded along a conventional He had, indeed, the boldness to adopt the stage, against which in that period, and for many years afterwards, the respectable British parent is found protesting with severity and contempt. But when he did this he was an adventurous lad, with no position to lose, and the avocation of the actor no doubt consorted as well with his necessities as with his humor and talents. It does not appear that there was either moral courage or mental prescience in the choice. He was a bold. high-spirited youth. He was fascinated by the playhouse, and he drifted into acting as a source of pleasure and a means of advancement. When thus embarked he soon sobered into the practical English view of duty, and thereafter ambled calmly on in the beaten track. Through what is known of his intellectual life the inquirer discerns no impulse of positive originality. no exercise of creative power. His style as an actor was based on that of Garrick, and probably he could not have had a better model; but he himself was less a model than a shadow. He took the parts as they came, and he applied to their illustration dramatic instincts of a fine quality and dramatic faculties of a

high character. But he struck out no individual path. He resembled Garrick as Davenport resembled Macready, or as Setchell resembled Burton: he was of the Garrick school, and almost as good as its founder. His influence on the stage was not the influence of an electrical genius; he did not come to destroy, but to fulfil, the traditions which he found. That he followed the lead of Garrick, and not of Quin, was significant rather of temperament than of deliberate choice: brilliancy allured him more than scholarship; but, though he had been attracted to the school of Quin rather than to that of Garrick, he still would have remained a disciple. His services to the stage, accordingly, were those of an able and generous man, working by conventional methods in a traditional groove. He sustained at a high level the dignity of his profession, and was the more scrupulously careful of the integrity of the theatre because sensitive to the reproach under which it labored. While he did not presume to reject Archer, Careless, Woodall, Belmour, Scandal, and kindred shining scamps of the old English comedy, he evidently was the kind of man who must have acted them, not out of sympathy with vice, not with even the faintest notion of immoral intent, but because experience had shown them to be useful, and because they were in possession of the stage. played them as he played everything else, - as he played Facques and Horatio and Orsino, and as, had he lived in our day, he would have played with equal impartiality Master Walter and Foseph Surface, Ludovico and Adrastus, Alfred Evelyn and Captain *Bland.* He was a thorough actor; he helped to build up the British stage: he held, to the end of a long life, the sincere esteem of the public; and he left to history and his descendants an interesting and honorable name.

JEFFERSON THE SECOND materially differed from his father, not in worth or honor, but in important personal attributes and in the general character of his life. He was less sturdy, less bluff, less genial and companionable, less a man of the world, and more a studious artist. His temperament was more delicate, his nature more reticent, his mind more ambitious, his faculties more nimble and more brilliant; and the whole tenor of his life seems to have been carefully planned and rigidly governed. He saw at an early age both the direction of his capacities and the goal of his desires; and thereafter, in a spirit of simple, profound, and pure self-devotion, he moved forward to the attainment of his high and honorable ends. He was essentially a virtuous person, and acted always from the monitions of principle, never from the promptings of expediency or the fickle whims of social custom. His consideration for others was an exact regard for their rights and a tender sympathy with their sufferings. He was utterly unselfish, devoid of conceit and affectation, and he loved the dramatic art far more than he loved himself. His wish was to live the life of a good man and to win the success of a great comedian, and this wish was nobly accomplished. For business enterprise he had neither taste nor talent, and his mental constitution was such as required that personal aggrandizement

should be the consequence of personal desert and worthy achievement. His ambition was to grasp success itself, and not to grasp merely its results, and he would have been made thoroughly miserable by honors and wealth that he had not merited. This fine nature. flowing into all his works and ways, inspired his acting with all manner of lovely and winning attributes, those impalpable and nameless qualities which so far transcend both words and actions, in the expression of the human soul. His deficiency, if such it may be called, was - as is natural and usual in a comedian — a deficiency in the passions. No deadly conflict could ever have raged upon the theatre of that serene spirit; no pall of tempest could ever have lowered over its pure and pellucid depths. He felt no wounds but those that strike the heart. His private life was lived in the affections; his public life, in that realm of dramatic art which requires, exclusively, observation mingled with invention, eccentricity tempered by fancy, and humor touched with tenderness. As an actor his originality appears to have consisted in his extraordinary thoroughness and felicity of treatment. His genius did not dazzle; but it always delighted and satisfied. His contemporaries universally commended him as a natural actor. His artifice, accordingly, must have been perfect, and must have been employed with consummate skill; for no actor ever yet produced the effect of nature by being perfectly natural. While not the founder of a new school, he yet made and left upon his age the impression of being a unique actor; because he possessed, in unprecedented variety and fulness, the finest faculties and attributes of the best school of the past. His intellectual ancestors — if the present writer is not mistaken - were Robert Wilks and Thomas Dogget.\* He possessed all the delicacy, versatility, and deep feeling of the one, and more than the glowing humor and consistent and polished art of the other. "I can only copy nature from the originals before me," said Sir Godfrey Kneller to Dogget; "but you can vary them at pleasure, and yet preserve the This, undoubtedly, was likewise true of Jefferson; and there can be no testimonial more explanatory of his charm, or more significant of his exalted powers and achievements, alike in the conservation, the improvement, and the transmission of the best traditions of comedy-acting on the English stage, than the eloquent fact that, to the end of his long career, the actors best qualified to judge of such a matter - the actors like Hodgkinson, Cooper, Kean, and Forrest — heartily and with one accord pronounced him the finest comedian of the age in which he lived.

Upon the intellectual career of Jefferson the Third it is not needful here to pause. His character and his life had the calm beauty of an autumn landscape, of wooded hills and browning meadows, when the sun is going down. But his achievement as an actor was nerveless and colorless, and he exerted no appreciable influence upon the advancement of the stage.

In Jefferson the Fourth there is an obvious union of the salient qualities of his ancestors. The rustic

<sup>\*</sup> Wilks, 1670-1732. - Dogget. Obiit,1721.

luxuriance, manly vigor, and careless and adventurous disposition of the first Jefferson, the refined intellect, delicate sensibility, dry humor, and gentle tenderness of the second, and the amiable, philosophic, and drifting temperament of the third, all reappear in this descendant. But more than either of his ancestors, and more than most of his contemporaries, the present Jefferson is an originator in the art of acting. With him begins a new school of comedy, higher, though not finer, than any that was ever before known on the English-speaking stage. The comedians of the Burbadge and Betterton periods undoubtedly were rich in humor, and a few of them seem to have possessed superb artistic faculty in its display; but the inquirer will read many volumes of theatrical history, and traverse a wide field of time, before he will come upon a great representative of human nature in the realm that is signified by Touchstone, or Facques, or the Fool in "King Lear." Wilks, certainly, must have been a great comedian. He had tragic powers, too, and he was capable of tenderness, and his artistic method was studiously thorough; but it was in gay parts that he was best, - in Sir Harry Wildair and Henry the Fifth. The comedians of the Garrick period, aside from its illustrious chieftain, made but little advance upon those of the Restoration. The parts that were simply humorous continued to be the parts that were acted best. Even Garrick mostly kept his pathos for his tragedy: it was the glittering splendor of vitality that dazzled, in his Don Felix, and it was the various and wonderful comic eccentricity that delighted, in his

Abel Drugger. The growth of comedy-acting, nevertheless, took the direction of the heart. King, the first Sir Peter Teazle, had at least a ray of pathetic warmth. Holcroft and the younger Colman, breaking away from the influence of Congreve and Wycherley, set the example of writing in a vein that called out the humanity no less than the humor of the comedians. The influence of thrilling tragic genius, like that of Barry, John Henderson, and Mrs. Siddons, lent its aid to foster the development of its sister art. Munden, Dowton, and kindred spirits came upon the scene; and it was soon proved and felt and recognized that humor is all the more humor when it makes the tear of pity glisten through the smile of pleasure. From that day to this the stage in England and America has presented one unbroken line of comedians, who - possessed of diversified humor, ranging from that of Rabelais to that of Sterne - have also possessed the generous warmth of Steele, the quaint kindliness of Lamb, the pitving gentleness of Hood, or the sad-eyed charity of Thackeray. From that day to this the art of comedyacting has been allied to a purpose that aimed far higher than to make the world laugh. In Jefferson the Second this wholesome growth attained to its splendid maturity, and pathos and humor were perfectly blended. It remained that a rare and exquisite form of genius should irradiate mirth and tenderness with the glorious light of poetic imagination. The fulfilment came with Jefferson the Fourth. Most other comedians of this century suggest their prototypes in the past. Owens, Florence, Bass, Setchell, and Burton are names that

instantly point to a glorious lineage; calling up the shades of Wright, Reeves, Suett, Liston, Nokes, Kempe, and Lowin. Hackett, the only great Falstaff of the nineteenth century, - unless Warren equalled or excelled him, - always to be remembered as a representative actor, was obviously the descendant of Cibber and Quin. The honored name of John Gilbert was long since written with those of Webster, Farren, and Munden; and to that family belonged the courtly Placide, the polished and commanding Sedley, and the hearty, robust, and gentle Mark Smith. Sothern, that prince of elegant caricature and soul of waggery, was plainly of the school of Foote, Finn, and Mathews; while in many attributes John T. Raymond is of the same lineage, with an infusion of Tate Wilkinson. Lester Wallack, the most picturesque figure of a famous race, comes down to us in the brilliant comedy-line of Mountfort, Elliston, and Charles Kemble; while John S. Clarke is the heir in genius of Harry Woodward and John Emery, and more versatile and brilliant than either. But Joseph Jefferson is unlike them all, - as distinct, as unique, and also as exquisite, as Charles - Lamb among essayists, or George Darley among lyrical poets. No actor of the past prefigured him, unless, perhaps, it was John Bannister, - and no name, throughout the teeming annals of art in the nineteenth century, has shone with a more genuine lustre, or can be more proudly and confidently committed to the remembrance and esteem of posterity.

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